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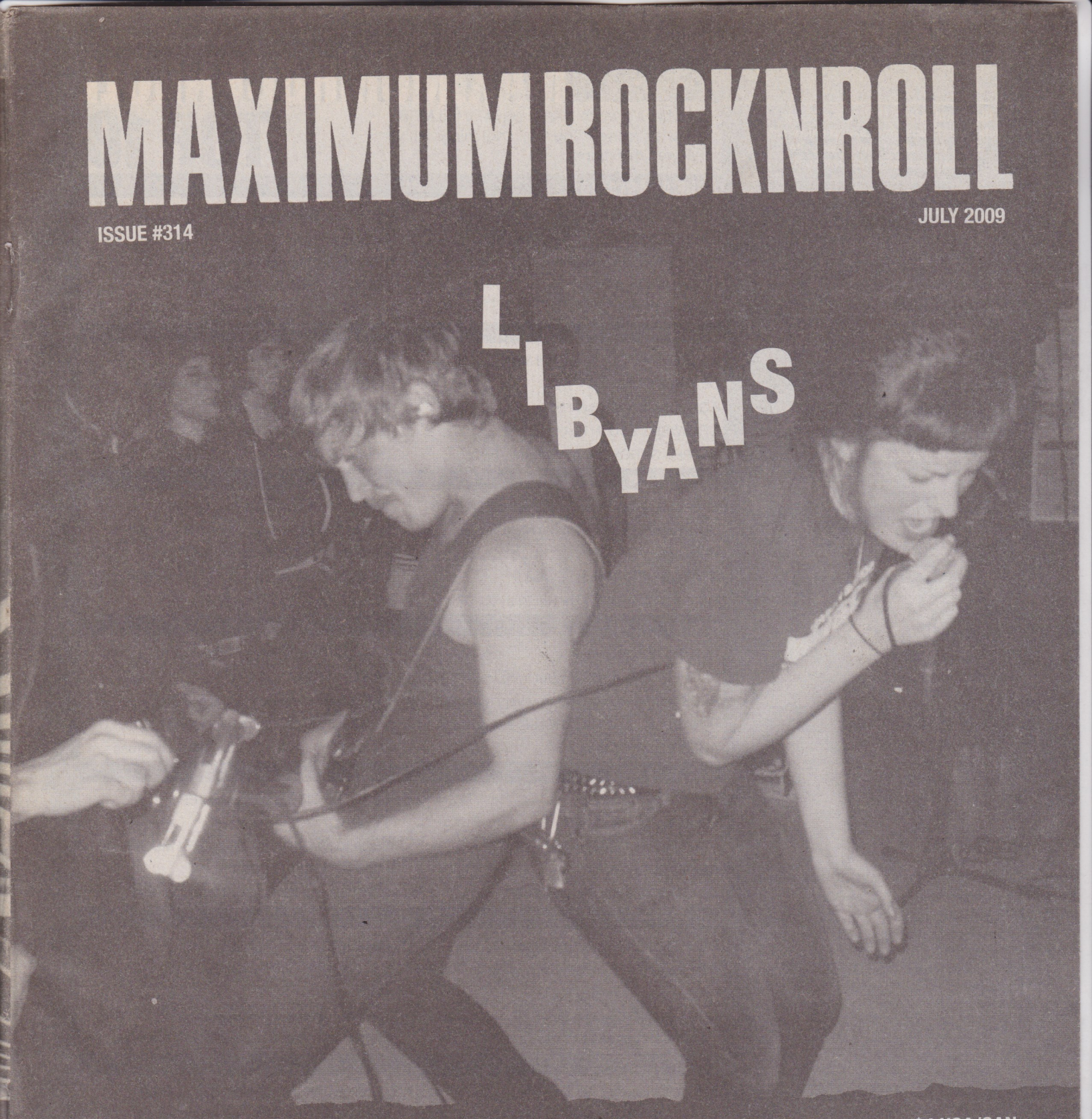

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#156 pts. 1 & 2, 161, 175, 179-181, 184, 186-197, 199, 204, 206, 208-210, 214, 215, 218, 221-225, 227, 229-236, 238-247, 249-306, 308-313

See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

DIANE ANASTASIO

- DRÖMDEAD-Donde Esta Tu Dios?-EP
- SACRED SHOCK-You're Not With Us-LP
- DESKONOCIDOS-Problemas-EP
- RUMOURS-tape
- GRASS WIDOW-LP
- MUGRE-En Estos Tiempos-EP
- RETAINERS-LP
- THURNEMAN-Luggsliten Eunad-EP
- URBAN UNREST-On a String-EP
- AGGRAVATION-Pressure-EP

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- SACRED SHOCK-You're Not With Us-LP
- DESTINO FINAL-live
- AGE/HELLSHOCK-split EP
- CROW/SEE YOU IN HELL-split EP
- HATRED SURGE-Isolated Human-EP
- ORGANISM-Hope-LP
- DRÖMDEAD-Donde Esta Tu Dios?-EP
- OMEGAS-False Worship-EP
- MUGRE-En Estos Tiempos-EP
- DESKONOCIDOS-Problemas-EP

TIM BROOKS

- SKIN LIKE IRON-All Human Failings-LP
- JAIL-There's No Sky (Oh My My)-LP
- PUNCH-LP
- STATIC STATIC-Psycho Eyes-LP
- SACRED SHOCK-You're Not With Us-LP
- V/A-Killed By Trash 2-LP
- BONECRUSHER-Our Nation's Burning-10"
- DESKONOCIDOS-Problemas-EP
- OUTDOORSMEN-You're a Tattletale, Baby-EP
- MUGRE-En Estos Tiempos-EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- DESTINO FINAL-live
- SACRED SHOCK-You're Not With Us-LP
- PERSONANGREPP-Fuck You Very Much-EP
- PUNCH-LP / AGGRAVATION-Pressure-EP
- AGE/HELLSHOCK-split EP
- THE CENTERHITS-City Girlfriend-EP
- PAHAA VERTA-VVVV-EP
- LIFE-When the Peace Collapses-EP
- MASAKARI-Eden Compromised-EP
- Devon Morf's 40th Birthday show at Gilman

LAYLA GIBBON

- DESTINO FINAL-live
- FEMS-Go To a Party-EP
- RATS-Intermittent Signals-LP
- RED EYED LEGENDS-12"
- IMPOSTERS-Time Has Come-LP
- DESKONOCIDOS-Problemas-EP
- TYVEK-LP
- SLÖA KNIVAR-Born To Rule-EP / MUGRE-EP
- MODERN CREATURES-LP
- SCREAMING FEMALES-LP/DUM DUM GIRLS-12"

BOB GOLDIE

- KEEP IT CLEAR-On Our Own-EP
- AIRES & GRACES-What Happened To the Kids-EP
- RATS-Intermittent Signals-LP
- URBAN UNREST-On a String-EP
- TRANZMITORS-Busy Singles-LP
- RADIO CITY-LP
- V/A-Rocky Mountain Low-2xLP
- PUNCH-LP
- V/A-Neighborhood Annoyer-LP
- WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES-Fit the Description-EP

KENNY KAOS

- ELEKTROLUX-ALL SHAM!-LP
- THE RIPPERS-Why Should I Care About You?-LP
- THE HUSSY-Winter Daze-EP
- LOVER-Worthless/Little Tramp-45
- SUSPICIONS-Don't Go/Time-45
- GENTLEMAN JESSE/FEVER B-split EP
- BARRERACUDAS-45 / BOBBY UBANGI-EP
- THE HATEPINKS-Sick Cake-12"
- TRANZMITORS-Busy Singles-LP
- AGGRAVATION-Pressure-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- JACK-O & THE TENNESSEE TEARJERKERS-CD
- TYVEK-LP
- EAT SKULL-Wild and Inside-LP
- DEAD GHOSTS/SMITH WESTERNS-split EP
- BELUGA-Pet-EP / EASY ACTION-EP
- CHARLIE & THE MOONHEARTS/TEEN ANGER-split LP
- SUSPICIONS-DON'T GO-EP
- THE SHIRKS-DC Is Doomed-EP
- THE FEMS-EP / STATIC STATIC-LP
- BUTTHOLE SURFERS-Brown Reason To Live-LP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

PAUL LUCICH – NEW TOP TEN!!!

- JAIL-There's No Sky (Oh My My)-LP
- EAT SKULL-Wild and Inside-LP
- DUM DUM GIRLS-12"
- TELEVISION PERSONALITIES-45
- CANADIAN RIFLE-Visibility Zero-LP
- JOY DIVISION-Manchester...-LP
- TRANZMITORS-Busy Singles-LP
- BUTTHOLE SURFERS-Brown Reason To Live-LP
- SCREAMING FEMALES-Power Move-LP
- GRASS WIDOW-LP

RAY LUJAN

- PRETTY WHORES-Teens Of USA-CD
- MODERN CREATURES-LP
- VISITORS-Tropic Of Cancer-EP
- WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES-Fit the Description-EP
- BONECRUSHER-Our Nation's Burning-10"
- MOTHER'S CHILDREN-45
- CAPITAL-Blind Faith-EP
- MINORITY BLUES BAND-Capitalized-CD
- HEARTBREAK STEREO-Inspiration-CD
- A DEATH IN THE FAMILY-Small Town Stories-CD

MARK MURRMANN

- THE SHIRKS-DC Is Doomed-EP
- V/A-Rocky Mountain Low-2xLP
- JAIL-There's No Sky (Oh My My)-LP
- RADIO CITY-LP
- RATS-Intermittent Signals-LP
- LOVER-Worthless/Little Tramp-45
- RED EYED LEGENDS-12"
- OUTDOORSMEN-You're a Tattletale, Baby-EP
- SISTA SEKUNDEN-SISTA FÖR SVARSLINJEN-EP
- BARRERACUDAS-45

BRUCE ROEHRS

- PIERCED ARROWS-live
- AGE/HELLSHOCK-split-EP
- BONECRUSHER-Our Nation's Burning-10"
- ROUGH STUFF-Out Of Control-EP
- SKIN LIKE IRON-All Human Failings-LP
- SACRED SHOCK-LP / NAYSAYER-EP
- V/A-Streetpunk & Disorderly-2xEP
- THE SHIRKS-EP / AGNOSTIC FRONT-LP
- V/A-Mercy For None-EP / MUGRE-EP
- V/A-Laatiminen Äpäröille-LP

FRED SCHRUNK

- THE CENTERHITS-City Girl Friend-EP
- SCREAMING FEMALES-Power Move-LP
- CANADIAN RIFLE-Visibility Zero-LP
- THE RATS-Intermittent Signals-LP
- GRASS WIDOW-LP
- RETAINERS-LP
- THE CENTERHITS/YOUR PEST BAND-split EP
- GLEAM GARDEN/TIM VERSION-split EP
- THE HUSSY-Winter Daze-EP
- DUM DUM GIRLS-12"

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- SACRED SHOCK-You're Not With Us-LP
- DESTINO FINAL/PELIGRO SOCIAL-live
- MUGRE-En Estos Tiempos-EP
- DRÖMDEAD-Donde Esta Tu Dios?-EP
- DESKONOCIDOS-Problemas-EP + live
- CANADIAN RIFLE-Visibility Zero-LP + live
- LIFE-When the Peace Collapses-EP
- CROW/SEE YOU IN HELL-split EP
- ORGANISM-Hope-LP
- YHTEIS KUNNAN YSTAVAT?-Porojen Maa-EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- IDLE HANDS-Programmed-LP
- ORGANISM-Hope-LP
- MUGRE-En Estos Tiempos-EP
- DESKONOCIDOS-Problemas-EP
- SACRED SHOCK-You're Not With Us-LP-
- WHORES OF WAR-Good Son-EP
- MIGRAINE-The Beyond-EP
- DRÖMDEAD-Donde Esta Tu Dios?-EP
- LIFE-When the Peace Collapses-EP
- PAHAA VERTA-VVVV-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Brainscan #23*
- *Cracks In the Concrete #11*
- *Cramhole #3*
- *Deny Everything #5*
- *Drunk Nach Osten #1*
- *Loserdom #19*
- *Nuts #2*
- *Radiation Sickness #4*
- *Ripping Thrash #25*
- *Slingshot #100*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophié Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality."

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Mortícia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kämvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abdúctee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Sòcial Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kykloopien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Ursa, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#307/December '08. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmström (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Herds, Acid Reflux, Grass Widow, Defect Defect, NN, Hunx and His Punx, Project Hopeless, Existers, Tom's Midnight Garden, Boston, Massachusetts and Sydney, Australia scene reports.

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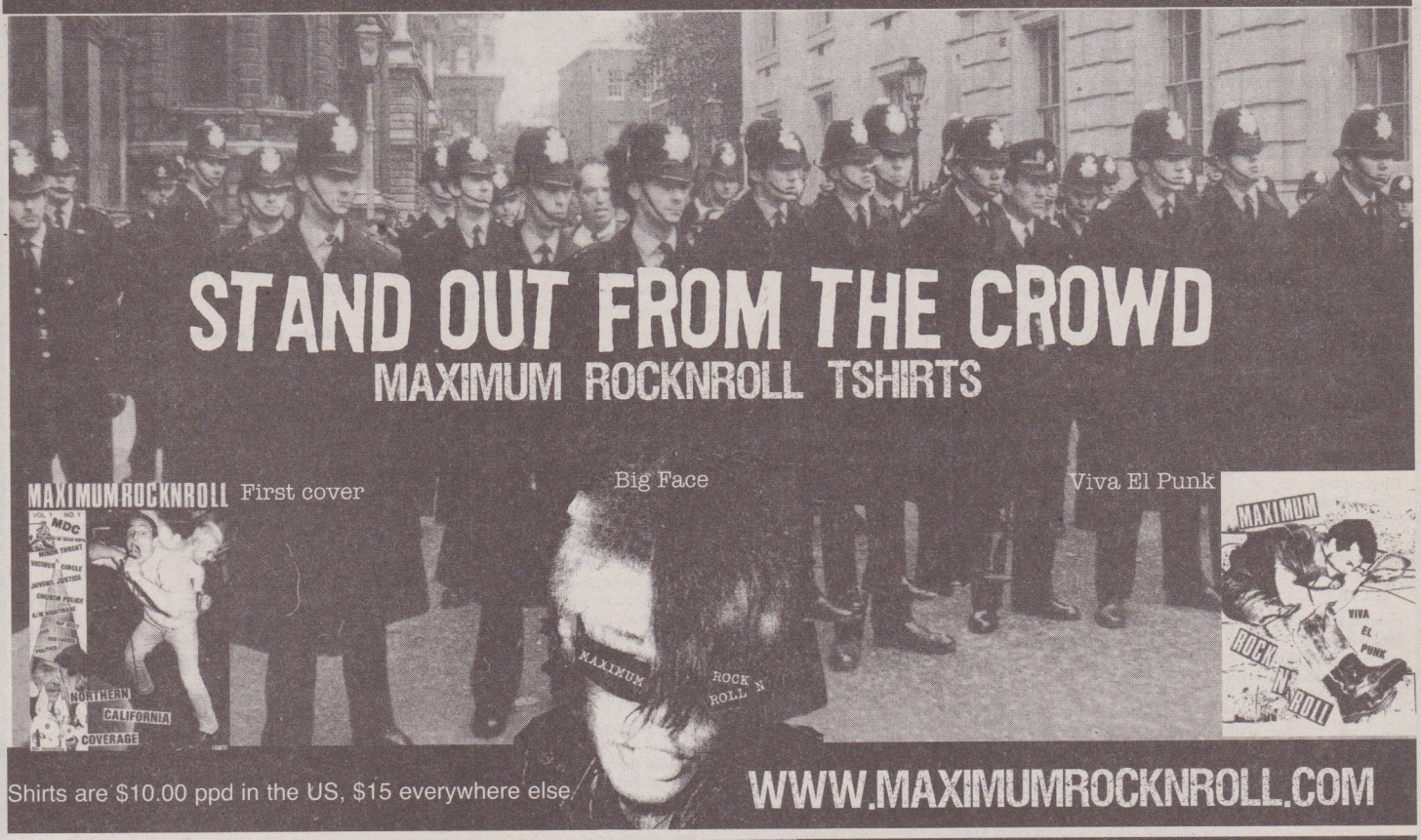

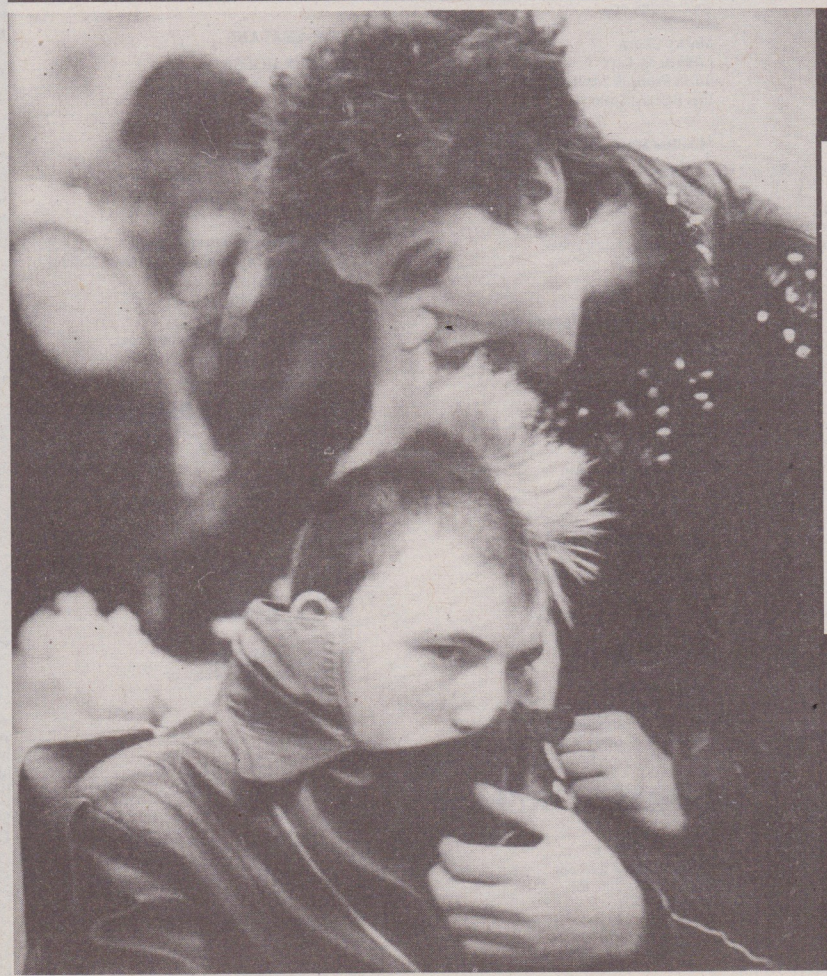

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LETTERS

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MRR—
I got a real good kick out of Juanarchy's response to the article on crusties. Apparently, there are good and bad crusties, and the bad crusties do drugs and have no future, while the good crusties hold jobs and shower and take pride in being part of the system they say they hate? Makes perfect sense.
—James

Hey—
I just wanted too write in about a small typo in the last issue #313, in the record review's label contact info section, for Damaging Noise Records you guys printed the zip code as being 90011, instead of 90022.

I sent another release along with the two that were printed in that issue so the other one should get reviewed in the near future, just thought I'd write to make note of it for future use, as I don't currently have a website / email for the label so that address is the only contact method at the moment.
Thanks and keep up the great work!!
—Fabian
Damaging Noise
PO Box 226720
Los Angeles CA
90022

Dear Maximum Rocknroll—
Wow, I didn't know you guys were still around after Tim died. I was SFHC back in the early '80s and my brother (back then known as Dave Rave) was a photographer for MRR doing the covers for issues #2,3,&4.
—Robert Tuley

Dear Maximum Rocknroll—
I certainly appreciate our issue coming each month via a four legged friends' subscription, and thus while reading the current issue and relieving myself of large fiber manifestations, I felt that I must add some counterpoints and facts to your reprinting of the Associated Press article "87,215 Iraqis Dead Since 2005".

It's understood that anyone trying to grasp the full picture of what the USA gov't is involved in, has to rely on *AP, NY Times, LA Times* etc articles for information, and then compare that to more so called 'left sources', which usually mean more reliable sources such as NGO reports, or the European press (unless of course that certain Euro country is actively invading a country also). And we all know there are still great reporters within the corporate media. But the headline alone should have rung a bell that you are in for an obfuscation of the real dead the USA is responsible for, directly and indirectly in Iraq. First we invaded in 2003. It is now 2009.
And that first sentence should indicated that maybe this is not a reliable report.
"Iraq's government has recorded 87,215 of its citizens killed since 2005 in violence ranging from catastrophic bombings to execution-style slayings..."

The Iraq government is an ally of the USA, even though they too are demanding complete withdrawal, which our democratic controlled government is basically ignoring. They are Shia controlled, and have overseen and been involved in a corrupt institution of near-dictatorship, as well as the ethnic cleansing of most cities. Not that I would suggest a Sunni leader from the Awakening would be a better source, but you get my point.

What that first sentence implies to anyone with critical thinking capacity, is that the majority of the deaths whether from 2003 or from 2005 to the present are inter-tribal deaths, or just rampant Iraqi revenge killings. Note that nowhere in the article is the USA military *ever* attached to any civilian deaths. This is very important. This is why democrats can say "Iraqis have to step up to the plate and stop the violence," and not have a shoe thrown at them, or something worse; say massive general strikes to end the occupation. As if Americans would ever "step up to the plate".

We can blissfully now go on our way, having elected a new president that is going to "withdraw", and blame the invasion on bad politics and then blame most of the deaths on inter Iraqi violence, albeit unleashed by a foolish imperialist endeavor. The 'tribal' thing you understand. "We" just didn't have much to do with that.

In fact, "According to a February 2007 AP poll, Americans' median estimate of the number of Iraqis killed since the invasion was just 9,890." Even the hardly left wing Mother Jones has had several articles about the corporate press' underestimate. This article is enlightening: www.motherjones.com/politics/2008/11/iraq-math-war
"As of that July, Roberts and Burnham would later estimate, the war had claimed about 655,000 Iraqi lives, suggesting that about one in seven Iraqi families had lost someone because of the ongoing violence. As in the first study, there was a wide confidence interval—plus or minus about 275,000 deaths. But even the low end of the range suggested a death toll far beyond anything previously reported. That October, after the new findings appeared in *The Lancet*, the critics pounced, again honing in on what they called fuzzy math. In a *Wall Street Journa*l op-ed, Stephen E Moore a pollster and former adviser to Coalition Provisional Authority chief Paul Bremer, declared, "I wouldn't survey a junior high school, no less an entire country, using only 47 cluster points."
'That's wrong,' says Jennifer Leaning, a professor at Harvard University's School of Public Health. 'You can sample very large populations with 33 clusters." Other epidemiologists I contacted agreed.'"

Most of these "controversial studies" as that AP article says in the second to last paragraph, are from years ago, and have been accepted by non-corporate statistical experts. What is equally important as underreporting of 600,000 then, to now perhaps one million dead Iraqis, is the underreporting of how at least 40% of those numbers are directly due to US airpower, helicopters strafing neighborhoods, and cordoned off anti-insurgency mass killings, which has happened twice in Falluja. And that the majority of ethnic cleansing/tribal bombings and 'catastrophic events' as AP terms it, are carried out by USA funded groups. It sure is no mystery who is causing the most misery, if you ask the two million Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria, something our press does not do. Compared to say Darfur. a place, for the moment, we are not bombing, and so liberals can be aghast at the death toll. Because Iraq just, you know—what a mistake...and there is no mass murder going on now?

Unfortunately, we can not interview the near one million dead. A synopsis will come whenever some stability comes to Iraq. And a census,

once a digging up mass graves is done. Surely by that time, it will be "ancient history", as the two million dead Asians in the Vietnam massacre/invasion is considered now.

For now, your readers should know John Tirman's article on Alternet "The overall figures are stunning: 4.5 million displaced, 1-2 million widows, 5 million orphans, about 1 million dead—in one way or another, affecting nearly one in two Iraqis. As Josh White of the Washington Post reported recently in a relatively rare (and bland) summary piece on the use of air power in Iraq, there were five times as many U.S. air strikes in 2007 as in 2006; and 2008 has, of course, started off with a literal bang from those 100,000 pounds of explosives dropped southeast of Baghdad. That poundage assumedly includes the 40,000 pounds of explosives, which got modest headlines for being delivered in a mere 10 minutes in the Arab Jabour area the previous week, but not the 16,500 pounds of explosives that White reports being used north of Baghdad in approximately the same period; nor, evidently, another 15,000 pounds of explosives dropped on Arab Jabour more recently. (And none of these numbers seem to include Marine Corps figures for Iraq, which have evidently not been released.)"

You can check the U.S. air force site to see that the US is bombing daily. It's no secret.
"4/14 In Iraq, an Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon used guided bomb unit-31s to destroy a terrorist bunker near Ba'qubah. The strike was part of a coordinated counterterrorist effort between Iraqi Security Forces and coalition troops. Coalition aircraft flew 26 close-air-support missions for Operation Iraqi Freedom. These missions integrated and synchronized with coalition ground forces, protected key infrastructure, provided overwatch for reconstruction activities, and helped to deter and disrupt hostile activities."
4/12 "In Iraq, Air Force F-16C Fighting Falcons dropped GBU-38s on a buried insurgent weapons cache. The strike was performed on behalf of the ground commander of a joint Iraqi security forces-coalition counterinsurgency mission."
What is a GBU-38? A 500 pound bomb.

I don't expect MRR to print photos of phosphorus burned Iraqis, or Afghans. Well, that is so cliche. You know. My god, lets have fun. That's like a Discharge cover or something.
But please, if you want your bands, and readers to be more aware, don't reprint articles that make them less so.

—Tommy Strange
San Francisco

Tommy—
I am in total agreement with you; over-reliance on mainstream news without also looking to other sources creates a very limited, distorted idea of what is happening. We have been looking for a new news editor for a few months now, and finally have found someone, who will hopefully lead that section in a more interesting and critical direction.
—Layla

Dear MRR—
I wanted to address a small review by Isaac Pririe. In it he reviews the AK Press book *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence*. Seemed like a decent job, except near the end where Mr Pririe claims the Industrial Workers of the World aren't a relevant organization. I would invite him to check out our website, www.iww.org and learn about the workers we've helped organize recently, from Starbucks workers to truckers. If you have a disagreement with Jon Bekken forwarding the book, that's your concern, but don't talk shit about a very much a live union

Solidarity
Mark
Lancaster, PA

MRR—
Thanx for reviewing the Telecommande tape in the last issue. However, the contact is actually 6128frustration@gmail.com. And to anyone curious to check out the band or to read a fair review, I recommend other sources as well as their blog, where you can hear that they sound nothing like The Faint: 6128frustration.blogspot.com
—Julien/ Full Beans Tapes

Dear MRR—
A big thank you to Dan for giving my band Silent Majority an excellent demo review. We really appreciate it man! But listen, there's something I need to talk to you about—at the end of the review there was no address listed. How are the punks supposed to get their copy? Wee just made a bunch of tapes and CDs with lyrics in both, send a buck or two to 1930 SW 13th Ave Portland OR 97201. AKA the Punx House—write a letter too!
Keep up the good work!
Stay punk
—Marty Panic

Dear MRR—
I have a feeling that I missed your deadline to get this corrected for the June issue, but I sent in issue 8 of my zine *GutterFlower* with the old P.O. Box address. The new address is:
—Melissa
PO Box 3082
Bakersfield, CA 93385

Hello MRR,
I just got the latest issue in the mail. Thank you for all you work. I'm always excited when I get a new issue and I look forward to continuing my subscription for as long as *MRR* is around. I wanted to thank Felix Havoc for his latest column on the issue of "expensive punk records". As someone who got into punk in the '90s and was spoiled by the "pay no more than..." culture, print zines, mailorder and record trading over the mail with punks from all over the world; I find it ridiculous that any self-proclaimed punk record label can get away with charging $7-$10 for a 7"ep. I also don't really understand the "let's only do 200 with a silkscreend cover" mentality behind a lot of labels, do you really have that little faith in your work? It certainly doesn't make any sense from a financial standpoint.

Yes, we're all struggling in these harsh economic times, but making less than 500 records is incredibly expensive and not really worthwhile for a band that is going to tour and will probably play to between 500-1000 people or more over the span of 2-6 weeks. Maybe the problem is that there are so many bands and releases out there that to make your band stand out in a crowd you have to make something special, something "gimmicky", because sadly...maybe the music is just not good enough to help sales on its own.

When I have to pay $9.99 for a Cult Ritual 7" I'm sorry but I feel pretty ripped off. It makes me feel like the band/label are doing *me* a favor by making this rare piece of art available to me for what it would cost me to buy two equally good 7"s by another band. Yes, I have a choice; thanks to free-market capitalism I have a choice; yippee!!! But... was I foolish to think that punk was supposed to be different? That punk is made by us and for us and not to take away my hard earned money just because someone thought it might be neat to make limited editions with die cut covers and then charge the people who go to your shows and buy your records for the labor? Who do you think is buying your records? Wealthy record collectors from Japan?! Who do you think is your audience?!

I'm not trying to dis anyone in particular, I'm just using the Cult Ritual 7" as an example, there is an abundant amount of labels and bands doing exactly the same thing and it's equally stupid and elitist. My praise goes out to labels and distros who don't treat their supporters/customers like an exclusive little club and make an effort to keep their releases in print and at reasonable prices. Thank you *MRR* for staying alive.
Amor y Lucha,
—Joao Da Silva
Brooklyn, NY

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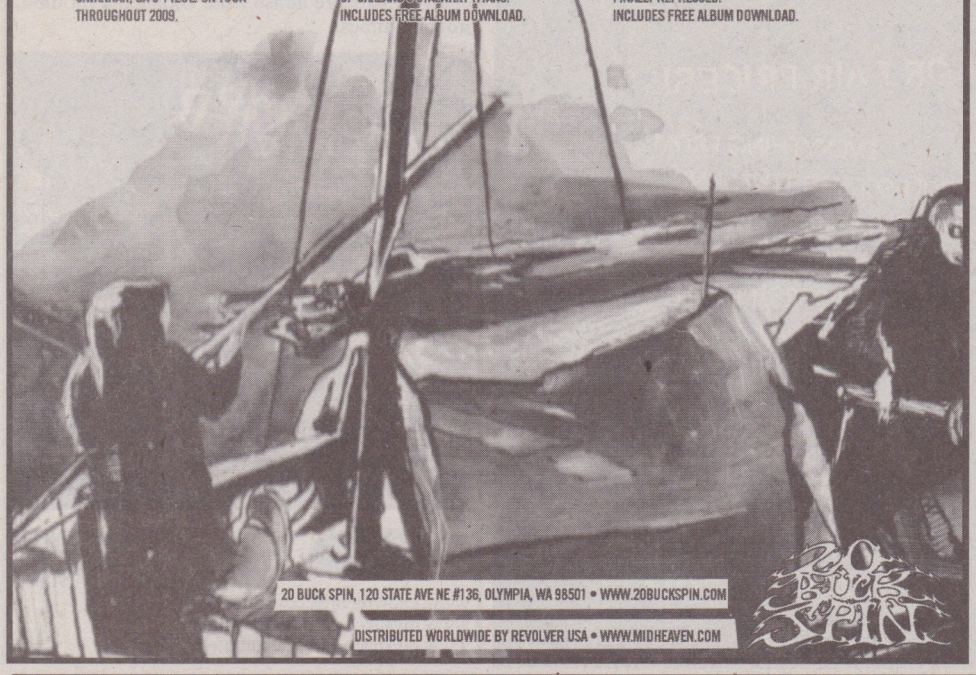

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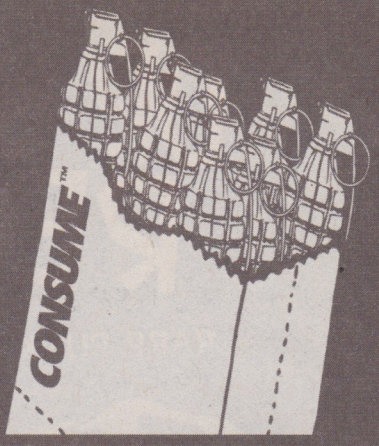

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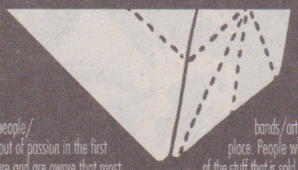


We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

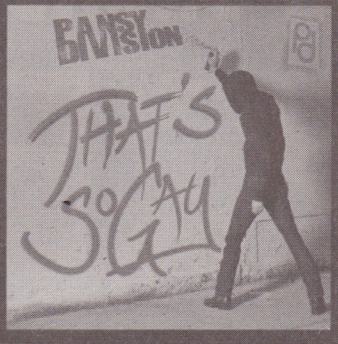
"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING- IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"

NOT SAFE FOR WORK SINCE 1979

PANSY DIVISION

"THAT'S SO GAY" CD

The first album in six years features Joel Reader (Mr. T Experience, Avengers) on lead guitar and 14 power packed songs for a post-Larry Craig and Prop 8 world.



CROSS STITCHED EYES

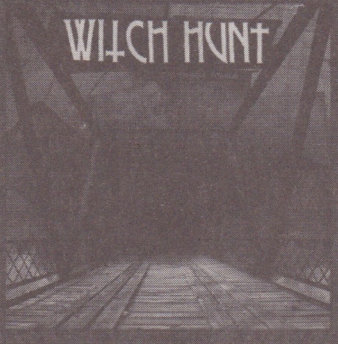
"CORANACH" LP/CD

International heaviness along the lines of Rudimentary Peni and Killing Joke. Members of Enemies, UK Subs, Zygote, and Subhumans UK.

WITCH HUNT

"BURNING BRIDGES TO NOWHERE" LP/CD

Philadelphia quartet's debut for Alternative Tentacles after two albums on Profane Existence. Will appeal to fans of Nausea, Leftover Crack, Born/Dead.



BURNING IMAGE

"FANTASMA" CD

The legendary goth-punk band is back, after a triumphant show in Oakland they've released this brand new record! 10 songs birthed in this new world of pain.

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COLUMNS

Well, it's finally getting warm(ish) in Boston. It's the time of the year when your jeans stick to your legs during practice, more discarded beer and soda cans show up on the floor in the place, and the fan is cranking full-blast at the drum kit at all times. A word of warning: Remember to turn off that fan when you're tracking in the summer, or at the very least turn it low. There are definitely recordings I've done where I can hear it going in the background before the drums kick in. Whoops… Also remember to come out of that stinking sweat hole sometimes, or you might realize later you've let those good time summer days pass you by.

Enough about that shit though, there's still plenty of time for rock 'n' roll, even if sometimes you gotta make time. So, firstly I'd like to start doing a regular feature here about records that sound good. I mean this is a music magazine, after all, and I find one of the biggest helps—even if you're only working on a 4- or 8-track—is finding some kind of starting point, or something sound-wise that you can aim for with the recording. Whether you're recording yourself, or some friends, or whoever, a good question to ask is, "What records do I want this to sound like?" That may seem a no-brainer, but you can get a lot of information out of the answer: How each instrument should sound, how they should relate to each other in the mix, the overall feel and "vibe" of the recording. It gets everyone thinking about the sound (the band probably spent the entire time up until now thinking about their songs) and it also helps to get everyone on the same page. That way halfway through no one starts complaining about the way the snare drum or the lead guitar sounds.

Make sure everyone knows that most records—although not always in the punk/underground world—are mastered after they're mixed, which changes and alters some aspects of the sound. What you're looking for is a starting point. It's not going to be a dead match, obviously. Also, prepare to be amazed as one of these two things almost always happens:
The folks in the band have absolutely not considered this at all and have no idea what record they might want to sound like when they are recording.
The folks in the band start naming off numerous records that all have disparate and conflicting elements that seem to cancel each other out.

At this point, I suggest you use your knowledge of the band and your powers of suggestion to try and narrow this shit down. I'd say if you can each get it focused on a couple elements from two or three records that you want to emulate, you will be in good shape.

For my inaugural entry in my list of great sounding records, I will go local. Well, local for *MRR*, not for me. I present Crucifix's *Dehumanization* LP for your consideration. What a fine release by a band at the peak of their game. It sounds huge, but never overproduced, it's surging with power and energy, it's well balanced… this is how some of the mid-era Discharge records should have sounded.

Boiling it down by starting with the drums: Probably the best song for hearing the drums is "How When and Where" as it kicks in with the stringed instruments ringing out, while the drums play a steady beat. The snare is way upfront: Loud and pretty thick, with a decent amount of distortion on it. It's very snappy, and you could probably achieve the sound they're getting either by using an actual compressor or just running a mic through a distortion channel on an amp or pedal.

You won't need too much to get it sounding crunchy—maybe two or three out of 10 on the dial. The kick drum is actually fairly low and muffled. Most records today have a really upfront punchy kick drum sound. Making the kick more subtle like this gives it a little more of a "vintage" sound. Toss a pillow inside the drum and loosen the bolts on the front head to lose some of that punchy sound. I'm gonna guess you won't find many drummers who like it though, but that's your battle to fight. Cymbals are pretty trashy sounding but still bright, maybe peaking out a little bit, but not too distracting.

Make sure you've got a good set: no cracks, no cheap shit, no nu metal crap. The toms you get a really good dose of in the next track, "Skinned Alive," which has some hyper-tom rumbling going on in it. Note there's a lot of attack, but there's not much resonance from them. In other words the hits are very clear but they don't echo or ring much. If your toms are ringing, try tapping a couple of folded-up paper towels to the parts that you don't hit. This ought to deaden the sound. This won't sound good for every band under the sun. I prefer a thunderous sound from the toms, but for certain fast hardcore bands you really only need to hear the initial hit. Anything much beyond that will be added noise anyway.

Moving on here, the guitars actually have a pretty classic Marshall sound. High gain, but no crazy pedals or feedback. Could be a JCM 800 or something comparable that they're using, although based on pictures and the numerous dive bombs, I'd say there was some kind of metal guitar employed. Still, none of that modern scooped sound is present. It's very open and full. If you've only got access to a newer amp, like some kind of Crate P.O.S., I'd suggest turning the mid-tones way up and cutting back some of the treble to make it sound a little less "Guitar Center."

For some of those super mega gain amps, I'd even suggest trying the "clean" channel, as it can still get a pretty good amount of distortion without sounding like the theme to a wrestling event. The bass guitar, on the other hand, is really distorted. It definitely has that bright sound you hear on Motorhead's "Ace of Spades." It's not actually that bass-y and serves more like a second guitar. You might try using a guitar head to actually achieve that sound. *Don't* play it out of a guitar cab—use a bass cab. If you only have a combo amp you'll probably be fine—as long as you don't crank it too loud: lots of mid-range and distortion. Maybe try an Ibanez Tube Screamer if you can get your hands on one.

You want that bass *l-o-u-d* in the mix. Maybe even a hair louder than the guitar, which itself should still be pretty loud. The bass on *Dehumanization* has a lot of texture and it's a big part of the sound. The drums all sit under the stringed instruments, except maybe the snare, which is pretty loud. The kick is definitely way down there though. The vocals will need a bit of echo, but nothing too weird—not much added gain, just a good clear recording that fits well into the mix. This will help segue into the other section I've got this time, which is about recording vocals. Read on…

So there you are, 4-tracking it up and things are going well. You got a juicy sound from the kit, some nice warm guitars and a bass that has a lot of body. Maybe you feel like you're in the home stretch, but obviously the missing piece is the vocal track here. Now it's true things can only be as good as your singer, but there are some things you can do to make it work a little better, depending on what the style you're going for.

A simple dynamic mic will get the job done pretty well: an SM 57 or 58, or any of the hundreds of mics meant to imitate those two. Usually if you plug a mic directly into a 4-track and start

singing into it (or, as is more likely for readers here—yelling), it's going to sound a bit dry, probably a bit quiet, and you may have some trouble keeping the vocal levels constant. The easiest way to start dealing with this is to use something in place of a pre-amp. In a real deal fancy pants studio, pre-amps basically work as the middle-man between the microphone and the mixer/recording device. Usually they boost the signal of the mic and add some color to the sound as well.

The easiest way to compensate for your lack of a pre-amp is by using a PA or amplifier (bass, guitar, etc.) that has a line out. You can run the mic into this, boost the signal, and then send it from the line out into your 4-track/8-track/whatever. If you're having trouble getting the level to stay constant—like the volume between words or lines seems to go up and down—try adding a bit of gain or distortion from the amp: it will help to compress the sounds and most of the time actually sounds pretty cool. If you have a reverb on the amp or PA it might help to make the vocals not quite as dry too, although it's easy to get sunk under too many effects. Don't drown yourself in them.

If you are getting a lot of "sssss" sounds, or pops (the pros call these "plosives") from the vocalist, you may want to construct a wind screen and put the mic on a mic stand. Don't have a mic stand? Grab one of the drummer's cymbal stands and some duct tape and use that to attach it. Your singer will have to get used to singing without holding the mic in their hand and without moving their feet, but it will be a lot easier for you to mix later, and most people get used to it pretty quick.

Now, to take care of the plosives, borrow a pair of your mom's old stockings/pantyhose, and get a wire coat hanger. (Maybe if you're a fashionable punk you already have this stuff sitting around.) Bend the coat hanger into a circle and stretch the stockings over it nice and tight. If there's excess, just let it hang off at the bottom. Now tape this to the mic stand so that it's 4-to-6 inches in front of the part of the microphone that you sing into. It may not work 100 percent, and you're probably going to have to turn up the volume a bit more on the amp, but it ought to help even-out the sound a good deal.

A couple basic EQ guidelines: The low-end of the spectrum is probably going to add mud to your vocal track. You might want to cut it by two or three decibels. The mid-range frequencies are where most of the clarity and presence will be and so I'd say give 'em a boost of two to four decibels. The high end can add some brightness, but can also add a lot of sibilance (the "sssss" sound), so depending on how your singer sounds you may want to cut or boost this accordingly.

A small end note: One thing I've never tried, but that I've read about being used on The Stooges *Funhouse* LP, is to actually have the singer sing through a regular PA setup and record the vocals via the PA speaker—in the same way as if you were recording a guitar amp. I absolutely can't vouch for how well this will or won't work, but home recording is all about making shit work for you.

That's all for this month. Remember: Some Of Your Favorite Records Already Sound This Fucked.

Alright, listen up, read this, c'mon. Look at your fuckin' Blackberry, what year does it say? Read it: 2009, *two thousand nine*, the fucking future—and the fact that I am writing this on an all-white laptop computer not connected to anything but the cyber pulses of the digital underground (a quadro-techno-wavelength that doubles as my favorite band) is a testament to the bizarrity of this reality. I'm serious! As "controversial" (read: swastika on a shirt when I was 15, boohoo) and moronic as I have been and am sometimes, I'm not the worst guy in the world, which is why it's breaking my heart to talk facts.

It's not '66, '67, '68, '71, '72, '73, '76, '77, '78, '79, '80, '81, '82, '83 or '84—that's the cut-off because there've been no good dates since then—especially '89, because that's when I was thrust out of mother's puss (a lie, I was c-sectioned) and into this cold wasteland world of unrelenting cruelty and bands like Finally Punk. My blood boils, really.

Anyways, the first column I wrote for this mag was a masturbatory throwaway decry of all things Punk, and every Tom, Dick and Harry told me that I was gonna end up some jaded garage rock guy in two months and six days. I wasn't wrong, but you were. You see, you know, I'm one of you, still a punk, still ugly and stupid. And about now, just like you're doing unconsciously, I'm searching desperately, vainly, for a point to all this. Some sort of reason to keep going and cocoon myself into the leather womb of my calf-skin coat each morning. Why is punk still around? What's the use? I feel more desperate every second I think about this: Why why *why* am I still doing this? Is there any answer? A reason

There ain't none—but good *god* in heaven—do not despair. You ever smoke cigarettes? *No*, I'm serious, keep reading, you ever smoked them? It's terrible for you, I mean fucking awful, but it feels great and makes you look cool and yes, it does get you girls (not sure if it works for girls v. guys cuz I'm of the Third Sex). But it causes serious health problems and will probably ruin the middle-to-latter part of your life and you're gonna stink the whole time.

Well, that's like punk, you know? It's cool and chicks think you're weird and sometimes (not often) they wanna see your fuckin' balls and god, maybe you'll get lucky and someone'll touch those repulsive sacks and then, oh then, you're in goddamn luck. But anyways, you can't think about it. You'll realize, heartbreakingly, that there is no g-damned *point* to Punk (wait for it) and therein lies the beauty and if you're looking for the answer or a change to society or anything like that, become an existentialist (just means getting a blowjob in Paris) or a cop. Punk is a lifestyle, and sometimes I like to think it's an escape. But it's not: If it was truly a way out, a tunnel, if I may, then there'd be (I think) some sort of Mohican Valhalla at the end, and there's not. I don't mean that figuratively.

I was reading an old issue of *Punk Planet* when I was on the pot at my parents' house today. I bought an issue of this at the Tower Records near my parents' house, apparently in August of 2002, which would make me 12 (I'm not bragging. Remember, I was reading *Punk Planet*, of all things). And it made me nervous, uncomfortable, because though it's over half a decade old and the publication is now defunct, it is just too goddamn *smart* for its own good. I don't mean intelligent, I'm fucking intelligent, it ain't hard to be intelligent, I'm talking about smug smirk smart. It made me want to give up, break every Wipers record I could find, bury my head in the dirt and listen to Agnostic Front. Hell, Murphy's Law.

And with that, it strikes me. I have the typical enemies, sure (cops, religion, Trash Talk), but who do I find myself constantly at odds with? Punks. But what do I need, shake over, sweat over? Punk. A conundrum so confusing, it could be French. I don't agree with barely a thing that the modern punk claims he does, and yet I can't be a hipster—I've got paunch and I hate getting laid. I guess I hate the G-8, but I'd rather eat a burger. Does this make me apathetic? I don't know.

I do know that *Profane Existence* did not make punk a threat again (it was a heavy metal magazine anyway) and I do know that *Heart Attack* was more like Piece of Shit (it's late and I'm tired). Punks don't make sense to me, and I don't think they ever will. I might even hate them.

But listen, don't write me a letter (from prison) complaining about what I'm writing. I'm not interested. I'll be here in two months, I'll be here in two years, I'll be here for a lot longer than that. Punk will be here, too, assuredly, soldiering on until all chord combinations have been recycled 15 times over and every possible combination of skateboarding/police/etc. etc. etc. We'll all sit in a circle, creased faces and wrinkled palms, praying to an effigy of Sid Vicious. We'll drink the blood and eat the effigy. We'll bonfire the 45s. I don't know what I'll do then. I think I'll kill myself.

The Rat's Tooth was a scum-punk basement in Kent, Ohio. My initial year of post-secondary

education was at Kent State University to study economics or English education—a mistaken direction absolutely devoid of any academic influence whatsoever. I met a straight edge African American studies major named Shawn who was heavily into rap-metal and youth crew. Most of my time was spent with him, driving in his car (which was later demolished and scorched by rowdy partiers) to the record and clothing stores in Lakewood. Although most of the stores have closed, My Mind's Eye Records is still open and is the absolute best record store in the United States of America.

An awkward, acne-ladled long-hair (me) walked into the dining hall wearing nothing but a Born Against T-shirt and a pair of Gabriel Brothers-quality jeans. A few fellow oddballs associated with myself were in tow, one who only identified himself by a Pig Destroyer T-shirt and the other who always wore Ray-Bans.

Behind the pasta bar, a middle-aged man was staring intently at our crew. The agitated and slightly off-kilter stare emanated from a stout, banker-or-accountant man with curly hair and tiny glasses. The attention from the pasta bar continued after we were seated. Surely enough, the man approached us at the table and asked, "Do you guys like grindcore?" After introducing himself as "Pigman," we all decided that we should form a grindcore band called "Eat Shit and Die" (affectionately abbreviated as ESAD.). Our meeting culminated in many nights of listening to Nuclear Assault and drinking organic cough remedies to get high. One night, Pigman drank two entire bottles and followed an ambulance around until its shift was over.

The Rat's Tooth was a scum-punk basement in Kent, Ohio. Pigman was on drums. Pig Destroyer was on bass (maybe guitar, I really can't remember). Ray-Bans and I were singing. The band made absolutely no sense and had no distinguishable sound. ESAD practiced an entire three times and played as many shows. I remember lyrics to only one song, titled "Eat Shit and Die," which were: Eat shit and die/Eat shit and die/Eat shit and die/Fuck you. A demo CD-R exists, but I have absolutely no memory of recording it.

Ray-Bans had a literature distro comprised of books stolen from Borders that he would bring to not only the shows but also to band practices. Pigman refused to ride in the same car as the stolen books, in fear of accusations of being an accomplice to the crime. "I would be transporting stolen material across county lines," he said. Our first practice took place in a rock 'n' roll house inhabited by either the owners of The Mantis, a defunct Kent shithole, or members of the band Sockeye. Even though it was only five or six years ago, my memory of this time is completely shot. I once incorrectly remembered the place being inhabited by members of both Party of Helicopters and Guided by Voices.

Our second practice was in the litter box room in the home of the head of Kent's Anti-Racist Action League. The last practice took place at a Kent community center mere minutes before we played (other members of the band state that this was actually two sets, but I must contest this notion). Before our final show, we played at the Mr. Roboto Project in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with Running for Cover and Adam Social. Pigman smelled horribly like cat urine at this show. It was later discovered that he was sleeping in the aforementioned litter box room without the A.R.A. leader's knowledge.

The Rat's Tooth was a scum-punk basement in Kent, Ohio. Eat Shit and Die's first gig was at the Rat's Tooth with Kill the Hippies, Frozen Throne, and Upstab. The Rat's Tooth was a ramshackle house of Kent punk rock/rock 'n' roll freak-regulars that sat on the fringe of town facing an abandoned park across from train tracks.

I believe two members of Kill the Hippies, an excellent punk band from the Kent area, owned the house. The gig was filled with Ohioan teenage drunk punks, completely fitted-out in plaid bondage and spikes and totally fueled by Steel Reserve and bottles of Mad Dog. To this day, the Rat's Tooth is the grimiest, wasted-wreck-of-potential that I have ever been to. Burnt Ramen. A rusted out meth-lab farm house. Houston hippie warehouses infested with baby cockroaches. A dilapidated boxing ring in Bakersfield.

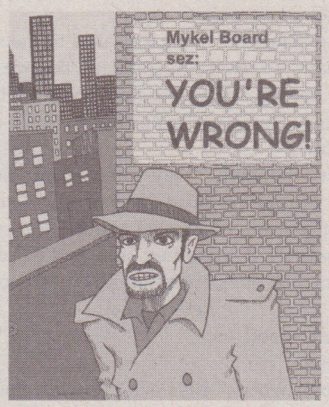
Nothing can touch or compare to the raw ignorance of the Rat's Tooth. Bands played behind a rusty chain link fence below an awning that served as a mounting place for the beers of the Rat Tooth's denizens: as long as the bands were loud and fast, the audience—both young and old—went off-the-wall ballistic.

During one band's set, the awning was pushed over, which caused hundreds of ignored beer bottles to descend on the crowd. Without precognition and through a haze of youthful intoxication, I drank a fallen dog-end of Steel Reserve that tasted as if it had just experienced an annual upsurge from the elevated awning. I immediately threw up. My vomit caused a great scene of respect and jubilation among my peers.

The Rat's Tooth was a scum-punk basement in Kent, Ohio. The guy who took donations at the Rat's Tooth was always doing bong hits. Upstab arrived and started a fight among the drunk teenage spike punks: knocking beers out of their hands, dancing around, general Ohioan what-have-you behavior. During ESAD's first live performance, the audience was mainly comprised of middle-age biker bar types and a gaggle of drunk punks. In the midst of the misguided moshing, a biker audience member put a paper bag on his head and lit it on fire. The flaming bag remained on his head for nearly 10 seconds before he was doused in beer.

After the set, shards of broken glass and the fallen, rusted chain link fence cut many of the rock 'n' rollers and punks. All who exited the Rat's Tooth were covered in some amount of blood. Upon emerging from the basement, the conflict between Upstab and the drunken teenage punks escalated into a brawl. During a rumble, a member of Upstab bled from his forehead due to punches from the drunk punk, who bled from his knuckles.

Everyone went into a panic because the kid was said to have had hepatitis at the time. The crew of teenage punks fled the scene, but vowed to return in larger numbers later that night to take revenge on Upstab. During the reconciliation from the hysteria, I began talking to a member of Speed Freaks Productions, who made the great film *Midnight Skater*, about ESAD performing in a movie about rival gangs of teenage rockabilly zombies. I'm not sure if the movie was ever made, but regardless, the returning punks cut our conversation short. A flock of teenage hooligans descended on the Rat's Tooth with pipes, switchblades and baseball bats. I high-tailed it out of there to avoid being beaten to death by a teenager wrought with Midwestern fury.



He's a rebel and he'll never be any good. He's a rebel and he'll never be understood. Just because he doesn't do what everybody else does. That's no reason why I can't give him all my love." –The Crystals

"Yessirreebob," says Mr. Howard, the Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. "I don't hate no one. But when that colored guy comes in here saying he lives in Mississippi, I tell him, "Listen boy, I don't hate no one. But you'd better get your ass out of Mississippi or you're gonna end up dangling from a tree."

Sid and I are at the Rebel Shop, on the Square in Laurens, South Carolina. We're here to meet a real Klansman—something that neither of us has done before.

We stand talking to Mr. Howard, who my cousin, a Laurens resident, has told me is the Grand Dragon of the regional Klan. We can go to his shop if we want, she said, but she, sure as a shofar, isn't going to set foot in that place.

Mr. Howard looks at me. "You know how old I am?" he asks.

I shake my head.

He answers, "I'm so old that when God said let there be light, I pulled the string... And you know how old my wife is?"

I shake my head again.

"She's older than dirt!" he continues and laughs out loud.

On the chair next to Mr. Howard, Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, is a younger-looking guy. Mid-40s, I'd guess. Bald with a short-trimmed gray fringe.

"This is Bob," says Mr. Howard, Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. "He's the South Carolina representative of the National Socialist Party."

We shake hands.

"You must've guessed we're not from around

here," I say to Mr. Howard, the Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

"Where ya'll from?" he asks.

I nod to Sid. "He's from Chicago," I say.

"Chicago?" says Mr. Howard, the Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. "We have lots of members in Chicago. Surprising from up north."

Sid and Mr. Howard shake hands.

"And where you from?" he asks me.

"Imagine the most horrible place you can think of," I say. "Where would you least like to live in the world?"

"Ah," he says, "you're from New York City."

I nod.

He extends his hand, "pleased to meet you."

"Yeah," I say, "we're Yankees. But we believe in free speech and we're glad you're fighting to stay open. Keep up the fight. Don't let 'em close you down."

"Oh," he says, "they ain't gonna close me down. I'm gonna close for a couple weeks so I can concentrate on my law suits. *Sue*—eee! *Sue*-eee! *Sue*-eee! It's like hog calling. I'm suin' my lawyers. But once I got that taken care, of I'll be back."

"Well, good luck," I say. "Don't let 'em get you down."

"Don't worry," says Mr. Howard, the Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. "When you get back up north you tell 'em I shut down cause they won't let me kill no niggers no more."

"I'll tell 'em that," I say. "I'll spread the word."

Sid (whose real name he won't let me use, but is something like CHARLES BORKAWITZ) and I make our purchases. I buy a T-shirt with a Confederate flag on the front. On the back it says "Keep the Rebel Spirit." Sid buys one that has a doctored picture of the moon landing. The astronaut is planting a Confederate flag instead of an American one. The caption: "South side of the moon."

"Should I pay with a credit card?" Sid whispers to me.

"No fuckin' way!" I say. "Charles Borkawitz at the Rebel Shop? Are you kidding?"

He pays cash.

On the way out, Sid picks up a couple of Klan membership applications. On the bottom, in fine print, is a note about how anti-violence the group is. It doesn't matter. Neither of us could join. It requires a statement that we're *"Pure members of the white race, of non-Jewish ancestry."*

Too bad: I could use some extra sheets.

I start this column in the Knoxville, TN, airport's continental terminal. I'm on my way back to New York after a 10-day tour of Tennessee with side trips to Alabama, Mississippi and North and South Carolina. I've been traveling with my pal, eccentric throat singer/poet Sid Yiddish. We've been doing some readings, performances and a whole lot we've never done before... like shooting a shotgun... and meeting a Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

In a way, I hate to start this column with that meeting. It just reinforces the clichés about The South. I don't want to do that.

I love The South: its got America's best food, friendliest people and some of the most beautiful countryside. Easy Rider, Deliverance and G.W. Bush (a transplanted northerner) have given it a bad rep.–it's better than that.

This is Sid's first visit. His first grits, first biscuits and gravy, first pork barbecue. First time shooting a gun too! I love traveling with him. It's like watching a toddler discover his own penis.

"*Wow*! Look at that!" he thinks. "It does that! And it's so much fun!"

"Wow, look at that!" says Sid, "It's a turkey. Right there by the side of the road. And up there, there's a hawk! I bet it found something dead in the woods."

"Er, Sid," I say. "Hawks don't eat dead things. They eat live things, like mice and squirrels. Buzzards eat dead things."

"What about vultures?" he asks. "Don't vultures eat dead things?"

"Buzzards are vultures," I tell him.

Sid wants to get something with a Confederate flag on it—especially a bandana. They're completely taboo in Chicago. You're even less likely to find one there than you are to find decent Mexican food in New York. And that's a pretty slim chance.

Me? I want to hit the garage sales, buy stuff to sell on Amazon and eBay to help pay for the trip. My Knoxville pal Chad is driving us around the city. Sid, who can smell these things, spies a lawnful of junk.

It's our first garage sale. Toy pick-up trucks and plastic super-water pistols litter the grass. The seller is young: in his 30s, needing a shave but not a haircut. He's alone in the midst of the rubble. No sign of wife or progeny, although most of the stuff for sale is kids' toys.

There's an air of dumbitude around him. It's hard to say why... His individual features are quite handsome. But there's something in the way he moves: a loping gate and slightly off speech, the -DY not quite on the heels of the *how*.

Besides the toys, there are a few piles of clothes. On one of the piles, a cardboard sign says "25 cents." Nothing interesting in that pile.

Looking further, I find a shirt with a Confederate flag on the front and a half-naked guy with a 10-gallon hat on the back. The shirt says: "Save a Horse, Ride a Cowboy." (I later learn these are words to a popular song, but I'm too far from popular culture to know it at the time.)

Tomorrow, Sid has booked us into a homo café in Nashville. This shirt is the gayest thing I've seen in ages. I gotta wear it to the show. I look for the owner.

Sid has taken him to a corner of the yard. Their backs are turned to me. It reminds me of the kind of huddle adolescents enter when they talk about a girl... and she's there: or maybe a patient and a pharmacist discussing Viagra.

When the huddle breaks, I show the shirt to the guy. "How much is this?" I ask.

He scratches his head.

"All the clothes are the same price," he says.

"I saw a sign over there that says 25 cents," I say. "Can I give you a quarter?"

"Nope," he says, confirming my suspicions about his intelligence. "It's gonna cost you 25 cents."

Sid doesn't buy anything. In the car leaving the sale, I ask him what he and the sale-runner were talking about so privately.

"I told him I wanted to buy something with a Confederate flag on it," says Sid. "I asked him if he had any bandanas or shirts. He didn't know what I was talking about."

Chad laughs.

"Of course he didn't," he says. "Nobody knows *Confederate flags* here... 'cept maybe old Civil War buffs. Those aren't Confederate flags. Those are *Rebel* flags. People down here aren't Confederates. They're Rebels..."

Chad's voice changes, becoming a bit more southernly.

"I hate the government. I'm a rebel. I don't like taxes or the government tellin' me what to do with my life. I'm a rebel. I don't hate niggers because of the color of their skin. I hate niggers because they're lazy. I'm a rebel."

His voice returns to normal. "That's how people think around here. If you live here, you understand it."

Yowsah! Suddenly, I get it. In a place like America where advertisers tell people *"Express your individuality by buying our product."* Where *everyone* except me is computing on an Apple notebook, thinking *they* are different and I'm the conformist. Where Rush Limbaugh, richer and more powerful than any Washington bureaucrat, still talks about how *he*'s the outcast. In America, we *all* think of ourselves as rebels.

In a culture like Japan, people think of themselves as being like their neighbors. They struggle to fit in. Be like everybody else. Even if they're different, they view themselves as the same. In America, even if we're just like everybody else we see ourselves as different.

And there's more.

Not only are we different from what we see as *everybody* else, *most* of us are *against* what we see as everybody else. We're rebels. Straightedgers, conservatives, punks, vegetarians all think they're rebels. They all see the rest of society as mainstream and they have to fight it.

There's still more: Some of us live to shock and offend that mainstream. Rush Limbaugh says he hopes Obama's economics fail. He wants to shock the liberals he thinks are running things. Boston straightedgers used to run around knocking drinks out of peoples' hands. That'll show 'em. G.G. Allin shat on stage. See those normal people run!

There's a name for actions that deliberately offend the mainstream. It's *punk rock*. Rush Limbaugh, Boston straightedgers and G.G. Allin are punk rock. That Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan has to close his store because of lawsuits. But that's not the way he wants us to tell it to our pals up north.

"Tell 'em I shut down cause they won't let me kill no niggers no more," he says.

You can't get more punk rock than that.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or Web site viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to

email comment on the column]

—> *Finally, what the world needs dept!* Most of the masturbatory universe knows that the biggest tragedy of het. porn is that the guys are as ugly as a Chase bank. I love Ron Jeremy, but I sure as a limpie wouldn't want to fuck him.

Lately, I found some Web sites that I'm just rubbing raw to: great-looking guys as well as girls. Check out http://tinyurl.com/hubbahubbayowsah for starters. Then go on from there!

—> *I'll shit in the aisles Dept*: Ryanair, the British discount airline has started charging people to use the restrooms. This is a new low in airline hoodwinks. What's next—*free* airfare, but they charge you to sit down? Oh yeah, if you want actual wings on your plane, there's a $50 surcharge.

—> *You can't even take the kids to a fuckin' movie these days Dept:* Check out the ultra-Disney-fied costumes in the new Hannah Montana movie. You'll see the latest disgusting move toward Christian-friendly teen fashions.

Forget Britney-era bling 'n' bras or clingy American Apparel spandex, 16-year-old *Hannah Montana* star Miley Cyrus wasn't even allowed to wear leggings while the cameras were rolling. Spaghetti straps were out, as were bare bellies, micro-minis, one-shouldered tanks and anything resembling a camisole.

Now, the last reason ever to see a Disney movie has disappeared.

—> *War against fantasy Dept*: Amazon and eBay have banned the sale of *Rapelay*, a rape simulation video game made by Japan-based company Illusion. Now, New York City Council speaker Christine Quinn is urging other Web sites to do the same.

"It's easy to see why people are outraged," said Matt Bachl, a TV commentator. "Aside from the gang rape aspect of the game, the goal is to make women sex slaves without getting them pregnant. If a player fails, he must force the woman to have an abortion or risk being thrown under a train and killed."

How long is it gonna take people to realize that laws cannot stop fantasies? If you can't play the video game, I guess you just have to go out and do the real thing.

—> *A new political hero? Dept:* The Nebraska Court of Appeals has dismissed former State Senator Ernie Chamber's lawsuit against God.

Chambers, an atheist, brought the lawsuit in 2007. He asked for a permanent injunction to stop "fearsome floods, egregious earthquakes, horrendous hurricanes, terrifying tornadoes, pestilential plagues, ferocious famines, devastating droughts and the like."

First, a district court threw out the case. They said God could not be served legal notice, so the suit was not valid.

In his appeal, Chambers argued that since God is all-knowing, he would have received notice without being formally served.

The appeals court had a different reason for rejecting the case. They said that the court cannot decide on "abstract questions or hypothetical or fictitious issues."

Does that mean they think God is hypothetical or fictitious? I hope so.

—> *You talkin' to me, God? Dept:* The Arkansas State Legislature failed to pass a bill that would have allowed concealed weapons in church. Rep. Beverly Pyle, one of the bill's sponsors, said the proposal was about church-state separation. Churches should be able to decide for themselves whether or not to allow firearms in their buildings, she said, not the state.

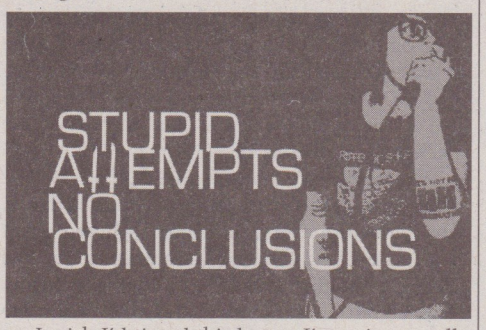
—> *Did you fail special ed? Dept:* So this guy finds me on Facebook. He's not someone I especially like, but I'm easy. Forgive and forget. Right?

How does he ask to be friends?

"Hey it's me? Remember me? I'm the one who fucked that girl you liked—on your bed in New York—while you were away in Mongolia. Will you be my friend?

Yea right.

Just when I think people can't get any dumber... somebody comes along and proves me wrong.



I wish I'd timed this better. I'm going to talk about my brother Dan because I've been thinking about family, because Mother's Day is the center of everyone's next weekend. My mom is a million kilometers away, both in the cross-continental sense and by way of years of disappointment on both our parts. Like the kind of shit that leads to a sort of strained relational apathy that hasn't led to a complete estrangement in order to avoid sudden moves. So we still exchange e-mails: I say, "Hi, I bought an old junky van, I got a raise, it's still snowing, how are you?" She says, "It's raining, my back's out again, your dad was laid off." I say, "Oh, Happy Mother's Day."

My conflict is that by the time you read this, Mother's Day was last month and you're over it, I bet. Not me. I'm awkward. I want to go to the Sunday flea market to buy stolen car stereos, but my friends are doing brunch and/or lunch and/or tea. Lame.

I wish I researched this better, because I wanted to start this column by talking about outsider punk bands as a source of camaraderie that I feel like I need at this time in my life. A sisterhood with other isolated devotees living in a region of "Who gives a shit?" and "What are you listening to?" I mean, I could point out that, paradoxically, I feel it's impossible to write about outsider punk as an outsider because if you were an outsider punk you would not know about other outsider punk bands. But this is the '00s and there's the internet and a new issue of *MRR* gets sent to my remote home every month so I have no fucking excuse.

The truth is that I'm still confused because I don't have punk handed to me on a silver platter anymore. Like I'm not all over stimulated from having the chance to see all the bands from the Top Ten list of this magazine playing up the street or in my backyard—or, if the band was too lazy or criminally recorded to cross the border, it was just a two-hour drive to Seattle or Olympia anyway. What's two hours from here? Come By Chance, Newfoundland, an oil refinery town with population of 265. No joke.

Anyway, so I'm recovering from being a spoiled scene punk who is still in shock over the idea of having to research things for my column or having to seek out bands for myself, which I haven't had to do for myself since I was like 16 and doing Lookout! Records mail orders with my brother. Because of involvement with "actual punks," dedicated research has given way to grandiose generalizations based on personal anecdotes that are presented as fact. Like this: One of my favorite parts of outsider punk is the prevalence of siblings within bands. You know, like how weirdo punk bands from small towns, from faraway places, always have siblings in them. Seriously, have you been to Ireland? Every single band there has a set of brothers in it: Every single one. It's a fact.

I used to find that annoying, things like twins playing music together. It seemed too convenient. Shouldn't we be challenging the status quo of who we are stuck with and rejecting nuclear family and whatever? But now I'm in the thought camp of punk being about getting shit done with what's around. Like not giving a shit about who's the coolest and who you know who writes the most blazing riffs, but instead, just starting a project with whomever you end up spending the most time with and writing blazing riffs together. Siblings. Your best friend from grade four who you made because her dad moved in next door to you. Your roommates. Your partners (does that make me a total nerd? Come on, guys, DEAD MOON?!).

I wish I was in a band with my brother, but I don't think it'll happen, although he recently Facebooked me to tell me he created a simulation of me in his RockBand band. I hated RockBand with a hardline punx stance until I worked with an 8 year old who I could only be sure wouldn't try to stab me when he was concentrating on playing the fake drums along to the YEAH YEAH YEAHS. His name was also Daniel, coincidentally, but my brother never would've tried to stab me, no sir. Vice versa? Sure. Maybe. I had an extreme seein' red phase. Call it puberty, call it the realization that everything was fucked and nothing would ever be fair. Whichever.

Despite my violent pubescent rage period, my brother and I started to get along the summer after I finished junior high. I wonder how opportunistic that was on my part, since that was also the time when he got his driver's license and we were given reign over our parents' old mini-van and its cassette player. It was also right after he had shaved his head into a mohawk to spite his ex-girlfriend and was consequentially given some dubbed tapes by these

socially anxious punk nerds eager to find new recruits.

I was especially into this one tape mistakenly labeled MUSTARD PLUG. It was actually OPERATION IVY, which I didn't figure out until years later. Man, I think I even listed MUSTARD PLUG as one of my top favorite bands on my ICQ profile. Boy, is my face red now.

So we spent like a year driving to all-ages shows in the city and listening to tapes. If there were boy and girl parts, we'd do them respectively, like BLATZ and SUBMISSION HOLD. It was great. It was a good year. He had my back. We lived together. And the summer after he graduated, he went to basic training so that he could promote pacifism within the Canadian military, and he went to college the next year to try to be an engineering major, but drank too much instead and failed out and moved back home. But by the time that happened I had gotten kicked out of there after my mom and I got in a fight and I was too stubborn to ever move back in with her again, so instead I went to live with my internet boyfriend's parents. And my brother and I haven't lived in the same city since. Oh well.

Stay punk, start a band with your little sister.

julsgeneric@hotmail.com

Lostmissing: A Public Art Project: part four…

A reminder: you know when you have a friend who you think will always be there—no matter what, at least you'll have that friendship, right? Lostmissing is a public art project about the loss of that relationship, a specific relationship for me—right now it's missing. I want to express myself in public space in a way that feels personal and more meaningful than a private expression, because I want to connect with other people and other Lostmissing stories. This project is a public expression of grief in order to feel hopeful again. It's about that random poster you see and you don't know what it means but your eyes get bright all a sudden.

Lostmissing #19

Losing you, I can look back and see so many beginnings—not the beginnings I used to see that cemented our relationship but the beginnings of our relationship ending. Even some of the things that could have made us more intimate, like that time when I said I thought I might want to have sex with you, I mean for so long I'd been trying to figure out ways to have sex that didn't just feel like escape or desperation or lack so I thought sex with people I trust, and you made the most sense. You were the one I trusted physically too. It wasn't a craving—I thought it might be comfort. You were trying the reverse—not to sexualize your friends—and so it didn't make sense but I was glad I could say it. I thought it would make us closer.

Even if immediately I sensed you pulling back, I wanted to think I was imagining that. You knew how much I treasured the physical depth in our interactions that particular intimacy my other relationships lacked and I could sense it slipping away you became more distant. I thought: Maybe you were just feeling distant maybe it wasn't about me at all. You'd even told me my sense of boundaries was too rigid, that I was missing out on opportunities. I started to wonder if my boundaries were letting me down, keeping me from some of the intimacy I wanted from my other relationships not just ours.

I might as well go back to when we first met, we would sit at the same cafe and your best friend who was a dyke thought my best friend who was a dyke was hot but snotty and I thought you were hot but snotty, and I remember the duct tape on the back of your leather jacket or maybe it was your boots or maybe your boots and the back of your leather jacket and how it reminded me of one of the first guys I had a crush on the back of his leather jacket.

Eventually we danced together at the bar where a certain group of dykes went to dance, and a much smaller group of fags who hung out with dykes, and then we were making out and sleeping together and already it was a dream. This dream of sluttiness shared, the dream we were enacting in crumbling apartments painted clashy colors to suit our moods this was the period when I would sign letters: Crave intensity, don't shun it.

The thing with you is that it just immediately felt like a shared experience of dreaming: Really you were the one with more of that experience I'd just escaped who I was supposed to be. So we spent a lot of time in your kitchen, cooking. Cooking, and making out. Later when I met the person who became my first boyfriend and immediately you pulled back sexually but I didn't understand that it was because you needed a boyfriend you would never have said that.

Remember that dream of sluttiness shared? Still we got closer and closer, I remember when you would wake up in the middle of night screaming and I would soothe you back to sleep. Back then sleep wasn't so much trouble for me. Or when you would eat non-dairy ice cream and vomit it back up, and then eat it again, and I thought it was gross but kind of funny you had a lot of habits like that. There was a certain kind of intimacy seeing everything you would show me.

And then of course there was the anger, the anger that felt like strength, with you it was soft like holding hands while throwing bombs but I also got angry at the people I loved, like that time with that first boyfriend who later became your boyfriend, we were arguing and I threw something against the wall and he got scared and I didn't understand why. Back then I would routinely borrow pint glasses from cafes so I could drop them out my kitchen window just to listen to them shatter, let the rage dissipate, of course I was scaring people too. I wonder what would've happened if I stayed angry like that.

I'm glad you changed your voicemail recording, briefly it got so friendly I started thinking wait, why didn't you ever have a friendly message before? But now you say to leave a text message because your caller ID isn't working. Maybe I'll call you now, and see if you've changed it again.

(Lostmissing #20 is a picture of an earlier Lostmissing poster over train tracks, and now it says "I almost hate you." Lostmissing #21 is a picture of a smashed door, with a Lostmissing poster pasted at the bottom, and the new poster reads: "I still miss you." Lostmissing #22 is a picture of a Lostmissing poster on a fence outside a graveyard, and the new poster says: "I still want to remember." Lostmissing #23 is a picture of graffiti on a building reading: "LEARN," and the new poster saysL: "Are our queer dreams just dreams?"

Lostmissing #24

I'm sick of thinking about what I want to say when I see you. I'm sick of thinking about seeing you. I wish I would just run into you already, so I wouldn't have to think about how I'll look when I run into you. I want just the right amount of sun so that my face glows, but not too much so there are more shadows. Now I wait four or five days to wash my hair so that it doesn't get too dry, and then on that fifth day it's perfect. I want to talk to you like you're a distant threat, something just outside of the hairbrush.

I did figure out the one sentence I want to say when I see you: The way you're treating me is disgusting. Simpler and more direct. Of course there's so much more, but it's good to have one sentence. The way you're treating me is disgusting and overwhelming and it goes against everything we built together over so many years and I still treasure all of that, even if now I hate it too and it makes me lonelier.

This project is not about letting go. This project is about expressing myself. It's about you and me and what you mean to me, what you meant and what you will mean once I get done with you, done with this project. What I will mean. I won't be done with you, once I'm done with this project—although I wouldn't mind. I'm not trying to let you go. I'm sick of what's necessary. I'm sick of you.

Lostmissing #25

I don't miss you, I miss our relationship. Maybe there are more dreams, even if you are not a part of them. I mean I know there are more dreams, and knowing this maybe I can also dream without you. The same dreams, even.

Lostmissing #26

I hate that it was so easy for you to throw me away, so easy because we hardly have any overlapping friends, so easy because our schedules and our routes through the city barely cross. It didn't used to be that way. First we existed around everyone and then later our relationship moved away to a particular space. I think I liked it that way. Maybe it even made us closer. Because then we could be around everyone else but still in that space, the imprint of your arm around my shoulder or a kiss on the neck or just

the way we walked together, sat together, holding the moments between us a shelter.

I miss that reliability, something I came to depend on but I didn't know how much because it didn't feel like a dependency. I mean I knew I could rely on you. How do I go back and correct that, correct it in each individual cell in my body, unlearning the safety that left me here?

***

If you want to participate in this Lostmissing project, feel free to put up these posters anywhere you desire, and send photos if you're driven—you can download all the posters via my blog, nobodypasses .blogspot.com, or I can also send you them. My latest book is a novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*, and yes unfortunately I'm still sleeping badly! You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.

A Black And White Statement

I may have touched on this before, but when I was a young lad of 22 or 23, I upped sticks from boring repressed Scotland and jetted over to begin life anew in the liberal enclave of Amsterdam, Holland. Most Americans (and Scots for that matter) who visit Amsterdam go there for its forward-thinking attitudes to marijuana and prostitution.

As a straight edger (at the time) in a committed relationship, Amsterdam's reputation for vice played no part in my decision to move there. While I can't deny that the relocation to the city of the girl I would later marry had a lot to do with me moving there, I was also drawn to what I viewed as a vibrant musical, artistic and political culture.

The year before, my roommate and friend Steve had returned from several months visiting The Ex at Villa Zuid, their rambling squatted mansion in cheese and windmill country outside Amsterdam. "Anarchy's great!" he enthused. "Everybody just shares everything. They fed me and put me up all that time and never asked for anything!" Later on, when I visited the members of The Ex who lived at the Villa myself and they learned I knew Steve, they complained that he sponged off them for months and never so much as washed a dish or contributed to the shopping, never mind put his hand in his pocket to buy anyone a pint. Anarchy!

Before I found a squat of my own, I house-and-cat sat for a friend of a friend named Arno, who was off traveling in Thailand. Arno's house was out in Koog-an-de-Zaan, which was a fair bit away from Amsterdam. You'd have to take the train in or ride your bike to the ferry across the river. I'd ride my bike (actually, I probably borrowed Arno's bike now I think of it) to work past container ships in dock. I'd get vertigo riding next to such massive, hulking monstrosities.

The time I spent at Arno's was quite idyllic. He had no bath or shower, but Terrie from The Ex had installed a top of the range bath setup in the Villa. That to me was what DIY was all about: not putting out your own records, but installing your own luxury bathroom suite. I'd ride my bike past windmills and over dykes in the evening dusk to avail myself of the facilities. They had quite a community going in that part of the world. I generally felt like a total outsider, although people did their best to welcome me and help me fit in.

After a few evictions from squats in Amsterdam, I found myself house-sitting over the river again, this time for my friend GertJan, who was off on tour with the Dog Faced Hermans. He had a massive room in a house with a few other anarchist/punker types. It was cold as fuck though. One winter night I woke up to find that my hot water bottle had frozen solid! What his place lacked in heat it made up for in his record and tape collection. I wiled away the winter evenings sifting through Gert's collection and rocking out to old Ex records, Lärm and Seein' Red, De Kift, Revenge Of The Carrots and more.

One band that Gert turned me on to that made a particular impression turned out to have been the inspiration for all the others: The Rondos. One of the first Dutch punk bands, The Rondos were actually more of an artist/activist/propagandist collective, and as such inspired the Ex to consider being a band as more than just putting out music. Over the years, Rondos-related information (and records) have proved somewhat elusive, and although the internet has made finding the records easier, there's not a lot of information out there for the non-Dutch speaker.

For a long time they were nothing more than a few scratchy, one-chord bursts of propaganda on a compilation tape. Isn't that how a lot of love affairs begin? The relationship developed; a split 7" here, another comp tape there. Scraps of poorly translated Dutch from the Web. The odd picture or mention in an old zine. Each taste got me more and more hooked.

Imagine my delight to hear that The Rondos seem to have awakened with a sudden burst of activity. A live gig in Rotterdam will be accompanied by a raft of discography releases, including a double LP on Red Wig Records (comprising a live set, all their singles, and the *Red Attack* LP), and a CD boxed set (two CDs and four books!) on their own King Kong records, not to mention a newly recorded split single with De Kift (who share The Rondos' drummer)!

If you haven't heard The Rondos or are missing some of their discography, now's your chance to stock-up on their political minimalist stomp-and-skronk. Of course, as of this writing I'm not sure how available those will be in the US, so it might take a bit of work. Point your browser at www.rondos.nl and www.redwig.org and refresh regularly.

One other site I found useful for this column is the *No Longer Forgotten Music* blog, at 433rpm.blogspot.com. Dig around, there's a ton of good Dutch punk (but not solely) and underground sounds on there.

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As has no doubt been beaten over your head elsewhere, we at *MRR* have jumped feet-first into millennium-era technology and have introduced blogging on our Web site. At this point, my sole contribution has been to post the US tour dates of the Danish band Hjertestop, but I can assure you there are regular updates from the usual magazine suspects and more besides. Also, if you're not regularly listening to *MRR* Radio, which can be streamed or downloaded from the Web site or from iTunes for free, can I suggest you start immediately? It's the easiest and best way to hear some of the great music that finds its way into the *MRR* PO Box every month. In fact, in the case of the most rare and most hyped releases, it might be your only chance.

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Rock 'n' Roll is a Four-Letter Word

I've always steered clear of anything reeking remotely of metal. To these ears, the chugga-chugga-whinny-whinny-wheeen guitars of metal always meant one thing: some dude in a Camaro was blasting down the street, winding up a beer can to chuck at me as he drove past, laughing his mesh-shirt chest off. It was always us against them. Punk and metal did not fucking mix, PANTERA and the whole horrible '80s crossover shit be damned. Fuck, if anything, that stuff just further proved the point.

So when Sarah passed along a recommendation to check out *Live to Ride*, the new New Wave of British Heavy Metal rarities comp (think KBD for NWOBH), I was a bit skeptical. I've lightened up toward metal as I've aged. I've even picked up a few '70s-era metal records, thinking maybe they'd click now, or hoping for them to fall more on the hard rock 'n' roll side of things. It rarely happens. I still can't get down with most metal.

In looking for *Live to Ride*, I figured I'd put it on and get hit with 'Nam-style flashbacks of breathlessly running from a Camaro full of jackals, hunting me down. However, once I finally found a copy of the fucking record (limited to 500, etc), the cover art and tracklisting put me at ease.

That's the fucking MUTANTS (UK) on the cover. And, hey I have a coupla of the records on here: STORMTROOPER, LIGHTNING RAIDERS and the aforementioned Mutants. That's three bands off the comp that've appeared

on various KBD-type comps. I put it on and listened to the fucker five times through, no shit. A-to-B, flipping it and starting over—absolutely killer compilation.

What you have on *Live to Ride* falls squarely in that glorious, shady area between pub rock, punk, metal and hardrock, circa 1978-'82—right when everything was really splinter, when certain groups of dudes were plugging away at making absolutely *tough* tight T-shirts and blue jeans rock 'n' roll. I've been devouring this stuff these days.

As I see it, this compilation sort of caps an era more than marking the beginning of one. Real fans of metal—and NWOBHM in particular—can and will argue against that. Fine. But from around '82 on (the time following the reign of the bands on this comp) that no frills, tight denim rock 'n' roll sound just fucking faded out, lost in a blizzard of New Wave, wanky Metal Michael Jackson.

Up to that point though you had at least a strong 10 or 15 years of high-energy rock 'n' roll. It usually wasn't topping the charts, but it was there. I mean, give THIRD WORLD WAR a listen. 1972. Those dudes (a studio band no less!) with the scratchy, vicious vocals, chopping guitars and chuga-lug rhythm feel dirty and dangerous in a way few bands can even touch. And then you have LOBBY LLOYD and the COLOURED BALLS. You might recognize Lloyd's name from the back of the (Australian) X's LPs. X got this Aussie hard rock legend to lend a hand in the studio, in the process creating another Aussie music legend. The Coloured Balls output stands with the most badass of them all. "Heavy Metal Kids?" Fuuuuuuuck. Anything off *Ball Power*? Jesusfuckingchrist. Music with fucking guts. No bullshit gimmicks. Highly underrated, outside of their native country. If anyone has any spare Coloured Balls records, I'm looking.

And then you have the band the HEAVY METAL KIDS. A bit more hit/miss, but when they hit, like on "Cops are Coming," they nail it. Throw in HURRGANES, DUCKS DELUXE, LITTLE BOB STORY, even DR. FEELGOOD…follow that lineage up to HAMMERSMITH GORILLAS (named after a Third World War song), and EDDIE & THE HOT RODS and you start finding yourself in punk territory. Then there's the early CHISWICK roster: GORILLAS, RINGS, LITTLE BOB STORY, MOTORHEAD…and that brings us back to *Live to Ride*.

If anything, the comp might be mislabeled. As I've dug a little into NWOBHM, I'm finding more (too much) of the four-minute long songs with fire-of-hell guitar licks and soaring MEATLOAF vocals than the stripped down, brassknuckle dragging, chugga-chugga, workman-like rock 'n' roll found on this comp. Whatever you wanna call this music, NWOBHM—punk, hard rock, rock 'n' roll—it's like fresh oxygen in my lungs. Not to be such a backward-looking turd, but after so much of the mediocre college pop/indie rock crap being passed off as garage/punk these days, or whole fucking weird-for-the-sake-of-being-weird weird punk shit floating in the pool, it's nice to clear the deck.

Along the same lines, but on this side of the Atlantic, the DOGS (LA, by way of Detroit) came up to San Francisco recently. I've grown skeptical of reunions, or even old bands that've been playing regularly again. Too many disasters, especially when a band pulls out the dreaded "new songs." Stick to the hits! But this three-piece, old enough to be fucking grandparents, delivered, in spades.

They played "Slash Your Face," sure, but the rest of the songs stood up right with it. Again, no goofy gimmicks, no need to weird out (hey, I like weird punk, but I got my standards and limits), no watered down, neutered pop. Just balls out rock 'n' roll, sans gratuitous wankery. Thank you, thank you.

Now, let's see what we've got for *new* music. Pardon any overlap with Mr. Chuck Barrels.

First and foremost—not new music—but please let me direct your attention to my review of the *Rocky Mountain Low* 2xLP in this issue. It's a monster compilation documenting the '70s music scene in Colorado. A lot of the bands represent the more common mid/late-'70s sound you find outside the coastal areas. Less "punk" (the SEX PISTOLS' circus hadn't come to town yet) and music that either was far weirder and adventurous than a lot of so-called "punk," or stuff akin to my above diatribe. Influenced by hard rock, rock 'n' roll as much as anything else.

Too tough, too original, too weird, too exciting to play the usual bars (not enough Eagles covers, maaaan), these bands in Colorado (and elsewhere) found each other and, in hindsight more than at the time, formed a scene. *Rocky Mountain Low* is a thorough musical, written and visual documentation of that scene, as it existed in the Rockies. At $28, it's a bit pricey, but a lovingly compiled release—www.rockymountainlow.com.

The little bit of chatter I've read about JAIL (myspace.com/jailjailjailjail) is a few people dismissing them as Indie Rock posers or something. Thankfully I hadn't read/heard any of that jive talk when I put on their new LP, *There's No Sky (Oh My My)*. These boys from Wisconsin immediately brought a rough around the edges REIGNING SOUNDS to mind, with a wee bit more of a country touch. Upon further listening, I don't know that that comparison holds up as well as I initially thought, but it's not totally off mark. Whether the other bands want to include them or not, Jail fit well in the small family of Wisconsin bands hitting the less-garagey '60s sound, like MYSTERY GIRLS and GOODNIGHT LOVING. The LP is limited, with hand-screened covers.

P. Trash unleashed a huge batch of records, all available in the usual limited collector-nerd and sane person editions. There's the not-really new LOVER! single (Worthless/Little Tramp), more of the same RICH COOK goodness, the second volume of Killed By Trash, that is garagey punk/hardcore bands covering Killed By Death favorites (I'll stick to the originals, thanks), the hardcore killer SISTA SEKUNDEN, the SUDDEN WALKS, new albums by DEAN DIRGE and BRUTAL KNIGHTS…lotsa stuff. It's hard to keep up, especially here in the States, doubly especially when money is tight. Looking into my crystal ball, I see a SECRET PROSTITUTES single in the works at P.Trash HQ among a ton of other shit.

Speaking of the Secret Prostitutes, get in touch if you happen to have a copy of their first 7" lying around that you wouldn't mind parting with.

The OH SEES continue their record release blitzkrieg with *Zork's Tape Bruise* (Kill Shaman), a collection of demo/practice recordings that comes with a CD of hard to find singles and junk. I'm often a fan of demo recordings, but this one doesn't do it for me. Given how many records the OH SEES put out, and how hard some are to get, I'll (try to) stick to their properly recorded material for the time being.

A new RATS LP is out on Mississippi, a beautiful reissue of the *Intermittent Signals* album, originally released in 1981. This is the Rats second LP. I'd guess the third original Rats album isn't far behind. And while the punky styling of the Rats is great and all, do yourself a favor and check out any of their old-timey compilations, the newest (and probably easiest to get at this point) being *I Woke Up One Morning in May*, featuring country blues from 1927-'34. Good, good stuff.

Chris Thomson's latest band RED EYE LEGENDS gets off on much better footing on their *Wake Up Legends* LP (Corleone Records; corleonerecords.com) than they did on their debut 12" that came out five years ago. That anticipated release (to me anyway) was such a let down after Thomson's run-in CIRCUS LUPUS, SKULL KONTROL, MONORCHID. Consider this a new start. *Wake Up Legends* makes up for that disappointment, and for lost time. Joined by members of WHITE SAVAGE and SUBMARINE RACES. Plenty of heavy, disjointed swaggering. Limited to 500 copies, 100 of which are on blue vinyl. Buy or die…or get the CD on File 13 Records.

Every time I see the BARRERCUDAS record on sale lists, I think it's either a new BARRACUDAS record, or they're selling one of their old records. I get excited…then let down when I realize it's not the Barracudas, but the Barrercudas, a new Douchemaster band. Of course, that sense of being let down faded after I actually heard the *New York Honeys* 45. Mind you, they're no Barracudas, but a different, awesome beast unto themselves. Of course they are. They've got a nice, rough-hewn DOLLS/THUNDERS sound. The new Atlanta sound? Sounds good to me.

Speaking of Atlanta, GG KING of CARBONAS fame sent a tape of some new songs that I assume will be released in some form or other in the coming months, following up on his *Adult Rock* Douchemaster 7". Good, unsolicited music in the mail! Such a welcome rarity. That shit hardly happens. Usually I just get lame CDs by people who still comb *MRR* looking to fill out their promo mailing lists for their shitty bar band that is trying to Make It. So, big thanks to Mr. King for the tape. King delivers more killer, tightly wound, short, sharp songs that everyone will just compare to the Carbonas (and they do sound like 'em, to a degree). But really—I swear—the new songs are taking on a life of their very own. I'm excited to hear more.

That's it this time around. My column is sup-

posed to be every other month, but in reality, if I have stuff to write about each month, I will. If not, I won't. I mean, who can fucking stand columns that include something like, "Well, I don't really have anything to write about this month," and then the person writes 2,000 words about absolutely nothing. Drives me fucking nuts. None of that around these parts. You can write to me care of *MRR*, or email at: markmurrmann@gmail.com.
Overandout.

It must be really tough to be a Republican these days. Completely marginalized and down to the foaming-at-the-mouth crazies—the religious zealots, the ones who think anything spent on a social program is creating a slide towards socialism, etc. A lot of these people are out of their fucking minds and their public pronouncements are becoming increasingly bizarre. There's no shortage of mindless, idiotic drivel coming out of the mouths of the Republican politicians and their string-pullers in the right-wing media. Not just drivel but paranoid, real fringe-type stuff. There are still people questioning whether or not Obama is really a US-born citizen. A congresswoman from Minnesota named Michele Bachmann is convinced that Obama's call for public service will result in FEMA re-education camps. That's not the only batshit-crazy proclamation she's made, either.

Virginia Foxx, one of those "family values" type Republicans from North Carolina (Focus On The Family just *loves* her) said, from the floor of the House chamber, that Shepard's being murdered because he was gay was a "hoax." She said, *"We know that young man was killed in the commitment of a robbery. It wasn't because he was gay... the hate-crimes bill was named for him, but it's really a hoax that continues to be used as an excuse for passing these bills."* And she uttered those words, incidentally, while Shepard's mother was in attendance. I mean that's just beyond the pale. What a wretched excuse for a human being—and even using the term human for this scumbag is a stretch. I have stronger words I'd use to describe her but I don't want to get into trouble, here.

And Shepard's murder *was* because he was gay. The two men who committed the murder admitted as much. The bill passed the House by a 249-175 margin—of course, the fact that 175 (all Republican) reps voted against the bill also speaks volumes. They can spout off about "religious freedom" or "state's rights" (hmmm... where have I heard that before?) but it barely disguises their homophobia.

Another group that barely disguises its homophobia is the National Organization For Marriage—one of those groups that only want *heterosexual* marriage, of course. They have a truly bizarre ad, "Gathering Storm," that's floating around YouTube, and it's one of those situations where you don't know whether to laugh or be outraged. Trust me, it's worth tracking down. But something you can definitely laugh at is the reel of auditions that got leaked to the internet and also shouldn't be too tough to find. The NOM has recruited some first-rate spokespeople, too.

First up is the former Miss California, Carrie Prejean, who spoke out against gay marriage at the Miss USA pageant. Here are her exact words when responding to a question by Perez Hilton (no idea who that is): *"I think it's great that Americans are able to choose one or the other. We live in a land where you can choose same-sex marriage or opposite marriage. And you know what, in my country, in my family, I think that I believe that a marriage should be between a man and a woman. No offense to anybody out there, but that's how I was raised and that's how I think it should be, between a man and a woman."*

Parts of that statement have been used in another scaaaary NOM ad, which uses the specious "religious liberty" argument, as if the gay marriage supporters are going to invade these people's churches and start fucking in the pews. Incidentally, it was just revealed that the group behind the pageant paid for Carrie's breast implants. Man, it just keeps getting better. I'm sure there's a special seat for her next to "Joe the Plumber" at the next GOP gathering.

One other character in with this group is scifi writer Orson Scott Card, who recently joined the board. He's a Mormon (don't get me started) and in a piece for *The Mormon Times* last year, he essentially advocated the overthrow of the government if Prop 8 failed in California. He wrote, *"Regardless of law, marriage has only one definition, and any government that attempts to change it is my mortal enemy. I will act to destroy that government and bring it down, so it can be replaced with a government that will respect and support marriage, and help me raise my children in a society where they will expect to marry in their turn."* The Republicans are always trying to paint those on the left as traitors. I'd argue, by their definition, these are treasonous, incendiary statements. Seriously, where do these people come from? Never mind... I don't want to know.

Speaking of right-wing icons, around the time you'll be reading this, it will be the fifth anniversary of the death of Ronald Reagan, who shuffled off this mortal coil after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. If any one person inspired the hardcore punk scene during the '80s, it was 'ol Ronnie. When he died, I filled nearly two hours of Sonic Overload with anti-Reagan songs—and it's probably one of the most popular shows I ever did. It wasn't just American bands I played, either: Inferno from Germany, Stanx from Holland and Rattus from Finland were among the international talent who contributed songs about the "Great Communicator." There was no shortage of material, and I even threw in some more songs I missed the following week.

You know, it's funny—as I mentioned in an earlier column, the conservatives love to refer to Obama as the "Messiah" or "Chosen One," when the hagiography and deification around Reagan is just as, if not more, widespread. All the right-wing extremism, especially with the Christian right, became a dominant part of the political landscape during the '80s. Incidentally, as a bit of an ironic aside, one of the religious zombie crowd's pet issues has been stem cell research, i.e., they're against it even though it could help in the research to find cures for such diseases as Alzheimer's.

In fact, Nancy Reagan came out in favor of this kind of research. I have very little respect for Ms. Just-Say-No (remember her anti-drug campaign amounted to just saying that vacuous, meaningless phrase?), but she's right on the money with that one. And now that the one of the most anti-science administrations has been cast aside along with a good chunk of their Rethuglican brethren, let's hope it will clear the way for more funding of that type of research.

In the meantime, let's take a break from the Republican madness for some punk rock or, in the case of the next few bands, hardcore punk/thrash. There are only so many things you can do with the style, as I've noted before, but that doesn't stop bands from plying said musical form. First up is the Finnish band URBAN UNREST, with their second EP *On A String*, and it possesses the same boil-over qualities as the first one: six rippers dispensing with any pretense of artiness. Nope, these are rough-hewn songs—although the production isn't that rough. These guys could very easily be on either No Way Records or Grave Mistake, but the band put it out on their own label in co-ordination with United Shoebrothers (Tahtikalliontie 12, 00240 Espoo FINLAND, rabbitsfoot@mail.com).

COUGHING FIT's *The Reptar* EP has the Albany band indulging in some thrashin' mania and navigating the twists and turns pretty well. They add some heavier breakdowns that will make you want to punch the floor and some youthful yell-alongs, as well. In the lyrical department, Coughing Fit expresses the agitation that bridges adolescence into adulthood—and beyond. Par for the course; not bad, not mind blowing, but right in the middle and still enjoyable. (Homewreckords, 37 Imperial Ave., Cohoes, NY 12047, www.myspace.com/homewreckordsny).

FOR THE WORSE and ENEMIES FOR LIFE could sort of be called the bastard children of local (to me) hardcore—FTW being Bostonians and EFL coming from Providence, although their vocalist Kevin is from Mass. and used to shout for Suckerpunch a long-ass time ago: bastard children who would put a firecracker up your ass or piss on your heads. In the case of FTW vocalist Mike McCarthy, I've seen the latter happen with two unfortunate victims outside a FANG/VERBAL ABUSE show, and he also tried to bring a boulder into the show to do god-knows-what.

Anyway, on this split EP, McCarthy's band lays it out hard and fast, and "PND" has a

Slapshot inspiration, although Mike's vocals are a high yelp as opposed to Choke's growl. Their side ends with a rowdy cover of Fang's "Skinheads Smoke Dope." EFL mixes up the speeds with a good chunk of double speed thrash and more reasonably paced fodder, particularly for "News For Me." Their contribution is a little on the sloppy side, but there's still plenty of chaotic fodder by both bands (Tourist Trap, 58 Lexington Dr., Hyannis, MA 02601, touristtraprecords.blogspot.com).

Another band from these parts is BLANK STARE, and their self-titled 12" is a dose of ferocious, no-holds-barred hardcore. This is one angry sounding band, starting off with Benjamin's curmudgeonly lyrics and vocals that encompass outrage, but without the typical screaming. OK, he's not an old man or anything, but there's no suffering of fools here. I'd say "Fuck Your Life" provides a pretty good clue and the lyrics are rants that burst out in fragmentary fashion. For the most part, it's frenzied thrash with no breaks, just hot-as-fuck riffing and bass lines and stellar drumming. For a change of pace, there's the BL'AST-like sputter of "Another Blessing" and the pounding "Better Odds," the latter making its entrance with an ominous intro. They wrap things up with an uncredited cover of LAST RIGHTS' "Chunks" and it's almost as good as DINOSAUR, JR's version. Just kidding. No weak shit, here (Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl).

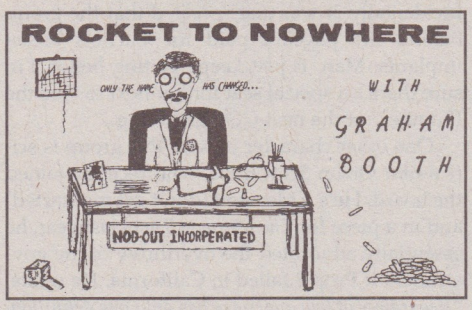
Speaking of the previously mentioned Grave Mistake (PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241, www.gravemistakerecords.com), their latest crop of releases is quite good. First up is the first 7" from NJ's PSYCHED TO DIE, a split release with Firestarter Records. There's definitely a catchy quality in their songwriting, and considering that one of these guys (maybe more?) used to be in THE ERGS, it's not a stretch—although this is a much harder-edged punk band. There's a West Coast feel at times, particularly drawing from the well of THE ADOLESCENTS for "Staged Reality" and "Five Year Plan," and TSOL-ish "Sterile Walls." On the more basic hardcore side of the equation, there's "OCD Life" (clever Rikk Agnew reference, by the way): definitely a stellar debut. TIME TO ESCAPE operates in more of a standard vein on their *Cost Of Living* EP. There's no revelation, no unique personality emerging, just no-BS 'core with speed and burn. The attitude? Succinctly expressed on "World Of Shit," which is what they think of the state of society. What's not to like?

Meanwhile, DEEP SLEEP offers both a new 7", *Paranoid Futures* and a CD anthology, *Three Things At Once*, which appends those six songs with the tracks from their two previous EPs. The newer material moves into slightly catchier terrain, although that's always been an element for these guys. Some of the drum patterns and guitar lines are quite DESCENDENTS-like and I can also hear a slight mid-late-'80s DC emo touch wrapped up in the band's punk rock package. A tweaking without changing the formula and the balance of the material on the CD offer a quick/easy way to catch up with this band's punchy 'n' tuneful sound.

GUILTY FACES' vinyl debut, *Nightmares*, also has the punk-meets-tuneful approach: Three songs packing stinging guitars, a solid backbeat and Tommy Perkins' phlegm-spewin' vocals. There are some strong hooks on the choruses, particularly for "Hospital Eyes." Looking forward to their album, which Tommy claims is a lot better. This ain't bad, though (Room 101, PO Box 37271, Philadelphia, PA 19148, www.room101records.com).

I'll wrap things up on a much more frenetic note and that's the reissue of KRIEGSHOG'S *Hardcore Hell* EP, adding an extra song, to boot. Raw-as-fuck DIStort-core to blow your eardrums to pieces. Everything is in the red here, but not to the point where it's buried in a morass of noise (such as with a band like LEBENDEN TOTEN). Feedback-spewing guitar blaze, earth-moving bass and cymbal-destroying drumming along with a little echo on the rabid vocals to complete the sinister effect. To quote one of their songs, this is battlefield indeed! (Landsberger Str. 146, 80339 Munchen GERMANY, www.heartfirst.net)

My mailing address might be changing (not sure yet), so if you want to send me something, email me to find out where: suburban voice@earthlink.net.



I'm sitting here fondling a Southern California punk rock classic, THE GEARS *Rockin' At Ground Zero* LP (Playgems). It has been a couple years since I pulled this out, but I happened upon a super-clean copy locally earlier in the week and figured it was long overdue for a spin. I remember being kind of 'meh about it, but this is actually pretty awesome. Has that perfect late-'70s Los Angeles punk guitar tone, just playin' super catchy, super rockin' beach punk.

Y'all probably know that Bacchus Archives reissued it with a new cover and bonus tracks from their 1979 *Let's Go To the Beach* 7" EP from *Bloodstains Across California* what, *10* years ago (doh!). The insane thing about THE GEARS is that in the early 1990s the *Let's Go To The Beach* 7" was at the pinnacle of Killed by Death-style records. Everybody wanted it. I was talking to an old man recently who told me that it was his #1 want back when he started fiending for the stuff circa 1992. Back then, he was a broke college student just like me, and has always been known as, well, "frugal" would be an understatement. I gasped when I learned that he actually shelled out $200 for a GEARS single on a mail order list!

O, how the mighty have fallen! If you're already familiar with THE GEARS 7", you may know that nowadays, demand for the EP has dropped significantly. There was a large-quantity find in the late '90s, and since then the Los Angeles store that bought the bulk of them has been unloading them monthly for about five years. It wasn't unheard of to score a copy for $20 (though I've still never bothered!). Some copies could actually be considered kryptonite amongst collectors, since the covers on the earliest copies were emblazoned with one-time member Crazy Ruben's autograph. Most collectors avoid his autograph like the plague.

Amazing, such a sordid tale of reversal, and yet I feel like I'm holding another, if opposite, reversal in my hands now. Collectors seem unaware that early copies of THE GEARS LP actually had a silkscreened cover. I remember being shocked since the printed covers look almost exactly the same. You literally need to see the matte silkscreen finish with your own eyes. I've seen half a dozen copies over the years, but I'm sure there is a bunch more. I can only imagine someday this will be a coveted want-list staple, but you can still probably luck out on the odd $20 copy like I did. Of course, the odder thing about all this is that both GEARS records are total classics.

Wow, that was four more paragraphs than I ever thought I'd write about THE GEARS! Especially since I'm holding another recent arrival in my hands that I prolly should've started talking about this month. Until a couple years ago, few people even believed that it existed. Then out of nowhere five years ago a copy showed up on eBay, sporting a *huge* Buy-it-Now price. Many onlookers (me included) were shocked to see that it sold within 12 hours to a notoriously reclusive collector. I imagine many people never even saw it. For those of us paying attention, at least we had proof that it actually existed.

Since then, the record has been championed by another notorious collector who has a copy. Unfortunately his taste has been, er, "inconsistent" over the years, so nobody knows whether it's actually good, or just a cool giga-rare artifact of the punk era. Another collector whose opinion I trust told me it was lo-fi and nothing particularly spectacular. My hopes have been spectacularly low ever since, and I'd resigned myself to never acquiring one of the world's rarest "punk" records, Mexico's 1979 DANGEROUS RHYTHM *Stray Cat (Blues)* 45 (Orfeon).

That's not to say that DANGEROUS RHYTHM doesn't have a good record. Actually they have a great record: their three-song *Electroshock* 12" EP from 1980. I've owned the record for many years, but my copy currently resides in deep storage so I haven't listened to it for ages. All I can remember is that it's catchy, aggressive Punk Rock with a capital "P." After the high from that first 12", their later full-length was a big disappointment. The cover gives off a fey rockabilly/new wave vibe, and the music is about the same. As a punk artifact from Mexico it's kinda cool, but a platter I want to spin on the turntable it is not. Unfortunately the days of finding *Electroshock* on the cheap are long gone, and even that has become a tough pull.

Then there's the other first generation punk obscurity from Mexico, THE SIZE 45 from 1981. I discovered a copy on a mailorder list some 10 years ago—back when I was fiending heavily for anything punk from South of the Border. There were other '80s releases from Mexico, like the legendary YAPS 7", but that came out way later in the decade. Or REBEL'D PUNK, who looked super punk but had a more conventional '80s alternative rock sound. THE SIZE seemed like it was too good to be true... a Mexican punk 45 from 1981 that nobody knows? And on red vinyl to boot!

Well, THE SIZE was a bit too good to be true, at least coming from my KBD/hardcore-obsessed ears. The 45 sports a heavy dose of new wave in the mix, helped in no small part by the prominent keyboards. Another one I haven't listened to in ages, filed away in a box somewhere. Thankfully for you, my rudimentary internet search apparatus allowed me to find mp3s for you on Myspace.

If you're not one of the chosen few to actually own a copy, check out the BROADTAPES label, who also released a SIZE *1979-1984* cassette compendium late last year. My current take is that THE SIZE's lone hit, "Tonight," reminds me of the earliest Small Wonder label-era CURE. Wearing my 2009 ears, this is pretty rad! Of course, the 7" has been getting pretty expensive lately, so y'all may've missed your chance. (I *knew* I should've bought five copies when they were still $20!)

So yeah, I've got this DANGEROUS RHYTHM 7" here. It's kind of amazing just holding it in my hands. Mexican records in any genre are usually beat-up to a hammered condition, yet somehow this 45 has survived in really nice shape, still in its original plastic Orfeon sleeve. Where to start? Well, "Stray Cat (Blues)" is obviously where to start. It's a Rolling Stones cover credited to M. Jagger/K. Richards.

The first thing that strikes me is that this is super fast. It has a super-speedy '77 rockin' pub rock feel like many of my fave '77 Brit punk 45s. And then the vocals come in... Would you believe a fake English accent? These vocals are straight-up Johnny Rotten. Honestly, if I didn't know any better, I'd think I was listening to an obscure '77 UK punk single. Thankfully it's a great one!

This can't be it though, so let's flip it over. Bonus! Side B has two tracks, "No, No, No" and "The Bar." "No, No, No" starts out at the same relentless pace, but lets the band's originality shine through. Super rudimentary meat and potato core with shouted lyrics and a "No no no" chorus just on the brink of falling apart... do it all over again and it's time for the next song. Is this proto hardcore or what? I can imagine at least one reader will say it's so.

But track 3, "The Bar," is far and away the best in the bunch. The speed never relents, the shouted vox let a hint of a melody shine through, and there's just a tad more complexity to the song to make it a big punk winner for 1979. Ooh! And a sick blown-out guitar break! Don't get me wrong, there's a real understated lo-fi quality that keeps it from bubbling over the top, but this is the kind of shit that creeps up on your psyche, leaving you crippled and begging for more. I guess I need to dig out that 12" now!

Before I leave you, I'll share with you another personal discovery that resulted from my aforementioned rudimentary internet search apparatus: all six tracks from the *Stray Cat (Blues)* 7" EP and the *Electroshock* 12" have been compiled onto an Orfeon CD reissue. I can't find much info about it, just that the CD came out in the '90s and is available from various Mexican sellers for around $20. I've never been big on CDs, but I'm also the kind of person who can wait 10 years to hear something on my want-list. Please do yourself a favor and listen to it before your 30th birthday!

Of all the whacky religions people believe in, I'm kind of fond of Zen Buddhism.

Maybe it was because of my proximity to the Beats when I lived in San Francisco between three and six years of age. Or because of my dad's interest in all things Beatnik during my adolescence.

Or maybe it's because Zen reminds me of Unitarianism. The local Unitarian church offered draft counseling when I lived in Ventura and was facing conscription for the Vietnam War, keeping me sane if not saving my ass as I confronted the US government during the '60s. Unitarianism, like Zen, doesn't demand that its adherents believe in anything really, not even god.

Perfect for an agnostic like me. Except that I've always lacked the personal discipline to pursue any type of spiritual practice, even the bare bones, anti-formalist, anti-scriptural, purely experiential immediatism of Zen. I mean, I can't even fucking sit and meditate for fifteen minutes a day when I have no job and all the time in the world. And Zen requires a lot of self-discipline, contrary to popular belief.

It's one of these popular misconceptions that I want to take on at the moment. The common perception of Zen is of a rarified, somewhat cerebral, comfortably pacifist, tolerant religion of robed, head shaven monks who spend all their time ensconced in monasteries engaged in quiet contemplation. This image has been fostered by western appropriation of certain Zen concepts, principle among them the notion of mindfulness. Popularized by Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hahn, among others, mindfulness has spread from the realm of New Age spirituality and entered the mainstream medical and psychiatric communities. The practice of mindfulness is now touted as being able to alleviate depression, anxiety and stress, reduce pain and suffering, and help people to be happy.

All well and good, except that this medical extraction of mindfulness out of the general framework of Zen Buddhism, much like the pharmaceutical purification of a particular chemical from a complex herb, tends to make mindfulness into a kind of drug. Instead of understanding mindfulness as a means of awareness sufficient unto itself, it becomes a cure for various ailments, something to be used to achieve an end. In the process, this reinforces the passive, peaceful stereotype of Zen Buddhism, when nothing about Zen could be further from the truth.

Kaiten Nukariya's aptly titled 1913 work *Religion of the Samurai* first advanced the understanding of Zen as a warrior religion, something that para-fascist Julius Evola reiterated in his 1981 monograph *Lo Zen*. It was Evola's controversial contention that all Buddhism, at its base and when not bastardized by popularization, is a warrior religion, given that Gautama Buddha was by birth a member of India's Kashatriya caste. Brian Daizen Victoria wrote his book *Zen at War* in 1998, which claimed that Zen was instrumental to the rise of Japanese militarism from the Meiji Restoration to the Second World War. Victoria's thesis is not without its critics, but the links between Zen Buddhism and military practice are hard to discount. Nor are they difficult to appreciate.

Zen mental training has a number of direct applications to warrior preparation, beginning with intense concentration that allows for the perfection of fighting skills. The powerful moment-to-moment awareness cultivated by Zen is an ideal state of mind for the warrior, permitting appropriate action to arise spontaneously, which is crucial to anyone in the heat of battle. And the settling, or clearing, of the mind, the standing apart from thought employed by Zen certainly facilitates the standing back from any moral qualms that might arise from fighting and killing. No doubt, western practitioners of mindfulness as a form of therapy would be appalled to learn of the easy application of this technique to the art of war. Yet its historical reality is incontrovertible.

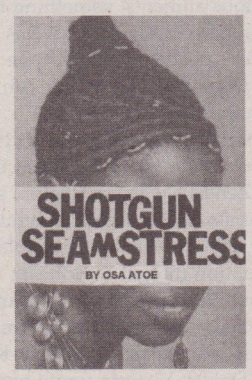
The singular western focus on mindfulness also tends to limit the qualities of mindfulness itself. Or, as Muho Noelke, abbot of Antaiji Monastery, once said:

We should always try to be active coming out of samadhi. *For this, we have to forget things like "I should be mindful of this or that." If you are mindful, you are already creating a separation ("I - am - mindful - of -..."). Don't be mindful, please! When you walk, just walk. Let the walk walk. Let the talk talk (Dogen Zenji says: "When we open our mouths, it is filled with* Dharma*"). Let the eating eat, the sitting sit, the work work. Let sleep sleep.* [...] *Ask yourself why you practice* zazen*? If it is to reach some specific goal, or to create some special state of mind, then you are heading in the opposite direction from* zazen. *You create a separation from reality. Please, trust*

zazen *as it is, surrender to reality here and now, forget body and mind, and do not DO* zazen, *do not DO anything, don't be mindful, don't be anything - just let* zazen *be and follow along.*

Easier said than done.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia @mac.com.



What follows is a conversation between zinemaker Nia Diaspora and myself. She is probably best known for her zine *Angry Black-White Girl*. She also wrote a zine called *The First 7 Inch Was the Better: How I Became an Ex-Punk*—a short, quarter-sized zine about her experiences as a queer punk of color isolated in punk scenes, and her decision to move on. Nia brought together dozens of mixed race writers for the zine anthologies *MXD: True Stories by Mixed Race Writers* and *Borderlands: Tales from Disputed Territories between Races and Cultures*. She lives in Oakland, CA but was chillin' with some old friends at Lo Mas Alla house in Denver when we had this conversation.

Osa: First of all, I just wanna tell you that you're a really smart writer and that your ideas about race feel really well-thought-out and sincere.

Nia: Wow, thank you. *Shotgun Seamstress* was totally a lifesaver for me too. Now that I'm not involved with punk anymore I still value that kind of writing. It validates what I feel or felt at the time, and reminds me I'm not crazy.

Osa: I'm glad that someone out there gets it and could relate. I really want to talk to you about your uninvolvement with punk, because you still write zines, which I think is a way of participating in punk. What do you think?

Nia: [laughs] I don't really think of zines as being inherently married to punk subculture. I mean, punk is probably how I got into writing them, but I don't write for a punk audience. I guess I am trying to use the medium to subvert it.

Osa: Come on! You're at a punk house right now hanging out with a girl that we both just randomly happen to know through punk... Just admit it you're still kinda punk!

Nia: [laughs] *Busted*! Well, I don't feel punk. I feel really alienated in punk spaces. Lo Mas Alla, where Luisa and some of my other friends live, feels kind of different. Most of the people who live there may still have love for punk culture, but they also view punk with a critical lens. At some point, most of them have told me they are growing out of punk. I could try and defend it further but it feels silly. I am staying with punks at a punk house. Fact. Am I a punk? No.

Osa: Yeah, well the point I'm trying to make is half silly and half serious. I do feel strongly about the fact that people of color end up relinquishing so much to white people just because white people take up all that space. I mean, how many times have you talked to another black girl who's like, "I'm not a feminist because I feel like feminism is for white women"?

And I'm thinking that feminism is an important tool, just like punk is for me, and I'm definitely not going to let white people define what it means to be punk or feminist. I'm going to use those words, those tools, in ways that benefit me.

Nia: I feel that, but defending punk and feminism can be a lot of work, and a lot of the criticism I've heard of both is valid. I guess trying to hold space for POCs in punk is exhausting, not because they're not already there taking up (some) space, but because being the only POC in a room is fucking exhausting in my experience. I wanted to retreat to spaces where I didn't feel like I had to fight for visibility or have to call people on their shit all the time, and for me punk was not that. Not that I was the lone voice of reason or the lone POC, but often enough, it felt like it.

I have nothing but respect for women of color who hold it down in punk rock and call shit out, and make records and write zines, but it's not for me anymore. Or at least I'm a lot pickier about the ways I engage with it and the situations I put myself in. You feel me?

Osa: Yeah I do. I think that's why it's so important to have this conversation because I can see how we're coming at it from such different perspectives even though both are valid. I totally relate to feeling drained to the bone by being in predominantly white "progressive" spaces. And it wasn't just punk. Going to college for women's studies with all those well-meeting white liberal feminists almost gave me an aneurysm.

At the same time, for me, it's not about defending punk or feminism—I just am those things in my daily life. I feel like I did give up fighting for visibility and correcting ignorance and oppressive dynamics in punk scenes. But that just meant that I spent more time hanging out with the brown kids and cultivating those relationships.

Nia: Word. It seems like some punk scenes have more brown kids than others.

Osa: Totally. Or if they're not there, you seek them out just like I sought you out. I feel like somehow I was lucky enough to meet other black punk kids who made me feel like I could have it all and not give up anything, and that had little to do with confronting white people.

Nia: That's awesome, but for me, forging a community with people like me in the punk scene—that is, queer folks of color—was an obstacle. Not that it was required, but it just didn't make sense. Having become largely politicized in punk communities was something that marked me as different from a lot of activist folks of color I wanted to build with, which marked me as "white," and as coming from a type of activism that didn't have an analysis around power and privilege when it comes to race, gender, class and queer and trans issues—which my experiences in punk communities affirmed. Or at least if it had that analysis, it wasn't practiced.

I also realized how dogmatic I had become as an anarcho-punk, and how some of the ideas that pervaded the scenes I was part of, about what made a good activist, were so rooted in privilege: white privilege, class privilege, privileges associated with not having to provide for a family. I go more in-depth on that in *The First 7-Inch*.

Osa: So what was your transition out of punk like? Did you have to move or say goodbye to old friends? Was it drastic or gradual?

Nia: I guess the drastic part of it was going through a shitty break-up and breaking ties with the anarcho-punk activist circles I had been part of in Boston. My involvement and disillusionment with punk began long before that, but the break-up inspired me to leave Boston, which opened up a lot of doors for me to create the kind of community I wanted. I went traveling and sort of unwittingly ended up on the punk house circuit, not really knowing how to break away from it (or who else but punks was going to take a stranger into their homes).

Almost all the people that lived in the houses that hosted me were white, and involved in the kinds of activist communities I was already starting to feel alienated by. It wasn't until I got to Denver, where I actually did stay at a punk house, but with punks (and non-punks) of color who seemed to be part of a much less segregated scene. In Denver, for the first time I didn't feel like I had to prove I was a POC. I said I was mixed and nobody took my light skin as an invitation to question my authenticity.

I felt like there I could be friends with punks, but not be married to the scene and the bullshit that came with it, and my association with punks wouldn't make my identification as a queer person of color suspect. But again, those weren't the kind of spaces I wanted to be in or felt particularly comfortable in, despite that I met punks I felt like I could trust on queer issues and issues of race (mostly, but not exclusively, queer punks and punks of color).

Osa: What does your new community look like, and what elements of punk did you bring with you?

Nia: The communities I've built for myself since leaving punk consist mostly of queer folks of color and a handful of down white queers. Most of them are activists and creative types, using art and music to challenge injustice. I guess the one "element of punk" that comes to mind is that I am still trying to subvert the media through my zines and through blogging, which have been really effective tools for community-building with other women of color and mixed folks.

Also, in the scene I was part of, punk, anar-

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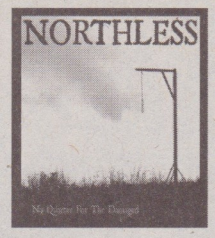

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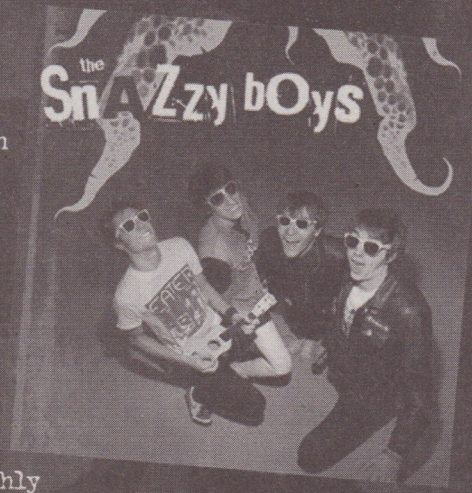

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chism and activism were closely linked. I was attracted to anarchism because to me, the abolition of hierarchy meant the abolition of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. So you could say that that fact, that working towards the liberation of all my people constitutes an "element of punk," but I think that's giving punk too much credit.

But hey, maybe all that empty rhetoric about "smashing patriarchy" at least put me on the right track: fanned the flames of my militancy and made activism look sexy. I'm also still vegan and still drug free, although I don't call myself straightedge so much anymore. I might not have gone vegan if not for punk and Food Not Bombs, though. Who knows?

Osa: Well, going back to your zine and your writing, I feel like your experiences as a mixed race person are just another example of how our society expects very specific things of blackness. Like that very common response you would get, "Well, you don't even *look* black!"

Nia: I wouldn't argue with that.

Osa: Well the fact of the matter is you're half black, in your zine you say you identify as black, and in a different historical context, you wouldn't have been able to drink from the same water fountain as the person making that comment. What do you think about that?

Nia: I wouldn't argue with that either. I mean its not always white people saying that shit. But I'm not sure that's really the point.

Osa: Yeah it doesn't matter who's saying it. It's just about the fact that it's all a construction. What it means to be "really black." Black people internalize it and other people of color buy into it. For instance, the belief that being weird, eccentric, queer, punk, feminist can make you "less black."

Nia: Yeah, "real blackness" is an elusive fucker as far as I can tell. That's very true. On the other hand, it's hard to feel "less black" when you've never been allowed to be Black. My inclusion in communities of color has always felt somewhat conditional, as if I were just "passing" as a POC and my membership could be revoked at any time. So for me, the lightness of my skin was a much bigger obstacle than my queerness or feminism. Maybe if people were more willing to see me as Black I would be getting some of that other shit instead.

Osa: So we're definitely coming from different perspectives on this, but I feel like in the end, we're both trying to expand all of these categories. I try and do it through talking about culture, music and art, trying to expand our own ideas on how black people can express themselves. You do it through personal writing about your racial identity.

Nia: Sure. I think that zines are a powerful tool in creating visibility for people of color, in punk and out. I guess you could say I am trying to expand people's definitions and conceptions of blackness, but ultimately I don't see my writing as a demand for inclusion in black or POC spaces, punk spaces or anywhere else. I like to think that my writing aggressively calls out and confronts racism, but when you boil it down, it's really: "This is my experience. You should know that it exists. And I invite you to check your assumptions. Peace."

Osa: Yeah, this zinester in the UK interviewed me and she asked me a question about visibility and I told her I'm not interested in it.

Nia: What did you mean?

Osa: Well, I guess it just depends on what you mean by the word. To me, it means making your struggles, experiences and contributions visible to the dominant group, being white folks. But I try so hard in my zine to speak to other black people and people of color exclusively. Staying in punk requires that I quit wasting my energy talking to white people and that I nurture myself and other brown folks around me. So even though I know I have a white audience, they are just lucky enough to be eavesdropping in on a convo that I'm really having with other POCs.

Nia: That's true. I guess when I hear "visibility," I think "acknowledgment that you exist."

Osa: But it's only white people who need that reminder, you know?

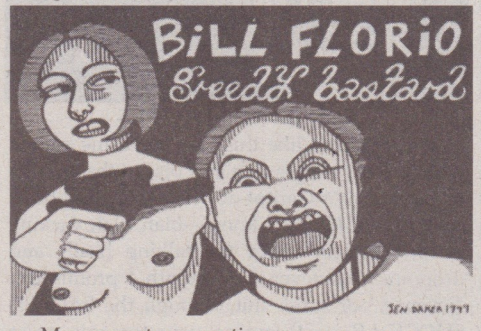
Nia: Maybe. There are also isolated POCs who need to know they are not alone.

Osa: Exactly. And this is for them. Any advice to brown kids who may be isolated in punk right now?

Nia: You deserve spaces where you can bring your whole self to the table, where you don't have to leave your culture, your brownness, mixed-ness, or your queerness at the door. If punk spaces are the kind of spaces where you can be your whole self and be embraced, good for you. If you don't find those spaces particularly accepting but demand inclusion and work to create a safe space and hold punk accountable to its allegedly anti-oppressive ideals, that's badass, and I personally am grateful that you exist and are doing the work you do.

And if punk isn't that space for you, is never going to be that space for you, or you just run out of energy trying to make it that, keep looking. There are spaces you can be your whole self, and you deserve to not have to check parts of yourself at the door in order to experience community and acceptance. It's not an impossible dream and it shouldn't be a privilege. Don't settle. If you keep looking I think you'll find that it's worth the wait.

To find Nia's zines, visit: www.strangerdangerdistro.com, and to read her blog, go here: abwg.blogspot.com. Look for her newest zine, *Ungrateful Black-White Girl*, also at Stranger Danger.



My current occupation exposes my warm, charming personality to the general public, whereas every other job I've ever had I've always been that dude in the back who does all the work. I was always nice to customers, but always lucky enough to have someone separate the wheat from the chaff, so to speak, as far as prepping me for meetings with the Hoi Polloi money spender. It was sort of nice having that wall of "You, sir are paying for my services for some unheard of amount of money per hour, so wasting my time will only burn holes in your wallet."

I'm exaggerating a bit. Basically every fourth workday it's my turn to answer the phone and the emails that come in off the Web site. It's generally not busy, and although almost every call is from some wackjob, I have to admit the wackjobs come in many flavors and it's much more fun than, "Why isn't my wedding video ready yet?" And as you know, because you're reading this, odd ranting and raving comes from folks who are sometimes stable and sometimes living on nothing but vegan doughnuts and things pulled out of the trash.

I had this idea of making a documentary or maybe writing a book where someone gives me a glimpse of their horrid mind through an odd exchange via yahoo mail or someone's determined fingers doing the walking, and I in turn track them down and dig as much out of them as possible. I'm going to start with the following individual…

Let's go through an abridged version of an email I received today. The full text is about 3,500 words, and I will happily send you a copy if you're interested. The names have not been changed since this person did not include their name.

The opening paragraph starts like this…

Do you know not to judge the content of an artsy person by the beautiful music, or compositions, or dance, or song..., Do you know not to judge a person by their academic portfolio? Do you know those who labour among you and seek to be in your midst and the midst of your student body?

The first thought I had was oh, an English chap or bird. My second thought was that episode of *Arrested Development* where Jason Bateman realizes his girlfriend is retarded and he hadn't noticed because she has a Brit accent. But anyway, besides the poor spacing and missing question mark, it's not a bad opening statement. I'm not sure about using "midst" twice in a sentence, but let's go on.

What are they doing when not passing a football, or playing a cello, strumming a guitar, finalizing an overdue paper, sharing a latte with a friend, or doing legitimate lab research? Or the faithful little innocent secretary, mail person, or account executive-who are they really. Yes, we want to think the best, but the roles of these extremists group have no conscience and are only interested in bringing their agenda to completion. It does not matter if it be your daughter, son, mother, father, grams, best friend, or worst enemy.

They are indeed extremists and probably have not had a sane thought since they were recruited out of their frustrations and insecurities. Do you know these people that labour among you? That is the question that each prospective employer, and member of society must ask if we want to live at some level peace and enjoy the freedoms we tout as Americans? The expression says, "Know those who labour among

you!" These words are more true today than ever. Don't judge by first appearances, or the beauty in their music, or the words expressed in written or oral format or those darling eyes and entrancing smile. Those things can be mastered and presented with such precision and beauty that we overlook the observation of their character and ethics of that individual.

Ok it's getting a bit scarier now, because now I'm wondering if this is some really poorly written song or poem, and that spacing error seems to be consistent, as if there is some grammar textbook somewhere that says "Always put an extra space when using a negative verb, negativity must always stand out in your paragraph!"

I'm so confused. I just re-read an email from Cassie, *MRR*'s grammar Gestapo:

-Put periods and commas inside quotation marks.
-So if you're quoting someone, or quoting song titles, the punctuation goes inside the quotation. That includes questions marks, unless the quotation itself isn't a question.
Examples: "She was eating a cheeseburger wrapped in a pizza," said Jake.
"Are you sure about that?" he asked.
-Put only one space between sentences. Not two.

***

Ok let's move ahead a few paragraphs. "A cheeseburger wrapped in a pizza? Is that good? I'm not sure about that!" This is in the person's email who spells labour like a twit, not Cassie. Speaking of, I'm not sure what the proper and modern way to quote an entire paragraph, but I'm sticking with italics.

Fight! Believe me if you fight like our society depended upon it. Fight like you can not just turn it over to the government, but join in battle in your home, school, and community—it will work. We can no longer just hand out scholarships to the best and the brightest if we are not sure about their development. We need to make sure that our schools are accountable. We want healthy young adults engaging in the research. This means a complete hands-on approach from everyone. Use your weapons of control, degrees, scholarships, etc.

If you really want to get that beast out of your schools, and community then learn how to fight because believe me in the absence of accountability these white extremists have learned how to fight below the belt and to fight without conscience. Ooh, it sounds like Mommy and Daddy are partially responsible, too. Ya, think?!

First of all not only is this person a wackjob, I don't work for any place that hands out scholarships. It's called "loan forgiveness"—there's a difference. OK, so far this email is shaky and long winded, but just possibly the poem has a happy ending, despite the small print suddenly appearing in a sentence for no reason other than perhaps make it seem like that part needs to be whispered?...

***

Subject: Beware: White Extremist Bio-Chemical Cell Group Functioning throughout the New England area with a strong hold on college campuses.

It goes on like this for a thousand or so words...

These extremists group have and utilize their ability to do the following:
illegal bidding & contract practices with hidden audio video equipment
securing jobs they did not earn
targetting an individual or group of people based upon their extremist attitude
contaminate the water supply
live near a central business district giving direct access to people and places
better to have employees on site (e.g. Cheesecake Factory) to insure contamination of certain products and bathroo(so where does s/he continually disappear to a couple of times a day)
contaminate books in bookstores and libraries
contaminate computers in places like Beast Buy, Compu USA, Apple and can they jack up a printer for life
love those gyms like BSC (contaminating the water, the sauna and steam) above FedX in Copley. Imagine targetting an individual in the gym and then targetting individuals in the Fed X below you. (These nuts are everywhere! I tell ya they fell through the cracks in the school house and hit their heads"

Ok, this is how the email ended. Now just to point out a few things on my own, I leave you with this:

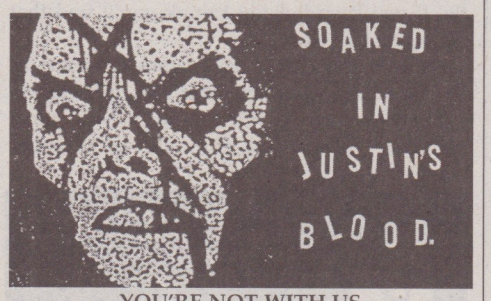
If one wants to write a crazy email or *MRR* conspiracy theory column, bullet points make it seem like you have multiple important points to make.

Not only will you want to use these bullets, you'll want to point fingers at major corporations *and* spell every one of them wrong, because it's obvious Compu USA spelled this way is symbolic of the strength that company has over all of us, and how its monopoly will never cease! Fed X is obviously a company that won't take the last name of its former slave master! And BSC, don't get me started. What the hell is BSC? Those who have figured out how to control these bullet points only shows the world how Microsoft has you under its thumb!

So PC-whipped are you, you white supremacist! Let's not forget, just because one has to work to earn a living doesn't mean you can't enjoy it.

Amen

bill@candids.com



YOU'RE NOT WITH US

It's moments like this that make me wanna whip out my ding-a-ling and piss in the mouths of punk rock's Geritol-downing bleeding-heart soothsayers. I know, I know—blah, blah, fucking blah...complain about the talking heads and dropouts. Whatever. Last month I promised a "journey," or some shit, through the SACRED SHOCK LP, so, throw on your Snuggie cause there is something about this Austin band that just connects with me in all the right ways.

I always feel people look at my ridiculous fanaticism with so many bands that others deem mediocre, as a way of me trying to be extra profound and confusing, whereas I, on the other hand, look at it as an in-joke that no one else will ever get or even care enough about to double check their work (at listening to music). Not that "mediocre" applies *in any way* to SACRED SHOCK, but when I'm amped on something, I seriously geek out like mad. I get stoked out on the details—like the way Billy sings "We don't need anyone's *heeeelp*," the second time through the verse of "Bow to None" on the second Deathreat LP, or the way that one little girl is fucking *busting* it on the hoola-hoop toward the end of K*** P****'s "Hot and Cold" video. Perhaps it's their ability to grab perfect guitar leads every fucking time, or the way Alex doesn't just sing along with the guitar parts and it sounds so damn *nasty*...whatever the fuck it is, *those* details, that make me rewind, over and over, or to listen to/watch a captured perfect millisecond of time, is forged into the grooves of *You're Not With Us*. Why, at 30 years old, do I still listen to hardcore every aching day and still get super pumped on it? 'Cause of records/bands/people like SACRED SHOCK.

***

So, you're generally a pretty calm, cool and collected person and very much an introvert, but you're at a show and a band that you fucking *love* is about to play. Most people are still outside smoking or mingling or looking at merch or whatever it is that punks do to flex their "cool" muscle, and the band isn't even at the tuning stage yet. They are still just adjusting cymbals and plugging in amps and shit, but you're getting too juiced to concentrate on looking through boxes of distro records, which you too tried to do but just ended up flipping real fast through one or two boxes 'cause you're so anxious at what's about to transpire that you're standing right in the center of the room, arms crossed, waiting impatiently as the adrenaline start pumping harder and harder, because you actually don't know what is going to happen. The typically sedate being that normally lives in your body may just lose control and find itself coming-to midway through a running front flip off the PA speaker. You know what I'm talking about—that extra pounding in your heart. An extended pick slide and one-chord-riding guitar part opens this record and is the recorded equivalent of that anxiousness and those moments, with its perfectly simple back beat to make your heart violently palpitate. Towards the end of "Blur of Reality" things dilute into a maniacal flurry of uncertainty, as demented cackles drown out pleasantries in favor of psychotic fervor.

Everything is corralled into the second cut, "Checking Out," with barely enough time to open your gills and catch that last quick breath of stale, carcinogenic air. Paranoia creeps up at a faster clip here and just as things start to get dark, some melody, which, in all observation is permanently inert in SACRED SHOCK's tunes, rears up in the form of a great riff and "harmonizing" vocal parts, to hypnotize into a state of sub-(un)consciousness like a pill handed forth in a tiny Dixie cup by a silky-smooth arm clad in

white sleeves, before the alarm goes off and you're back at work, where you remain for the duration of even the next beastly tune, "Closed Doors."

With "Bloodsucker," it becomes increasingly apparent how utterly *sick* the songwriting is on this record. Do you break something? Do you cry? Does someone get hurt? Is it you? Things develop mechanically. Like an assembly line. Bombastic beats lead to simply primal riffage as time trudges forth ever-slowly with the ticking of a punch-clock as the anxiety of your eternal internal bondage has you by the throat before throwing up your hands in submission standing to leave another agonizing day behind you. The A side ends with "New Medium," a dirtier hardcore ripper with zero trickery or flamboyance and packs basically as much punch as any other tune on *You're Not With Us.*

The second half of this LP opens with "Kill the Royalties," a cover of the second song on the HEADCLEANERS' *Disinfection* 7", that I didn't even notice was a cover when I only had a test press (natch!) and CD-R of this to listen to. I listen to *Disinfection* weekly but SACRED SHOCK has "made it their own" as much as they possibly could.

Track seven is "Parasite and Host," which, I'd say is my odds-on favorite joint of them all. It's like a two-and-a-half minute, high-frequency manic-depressive stupor that jerks the psyche back and forth between being stoked on how shamelessly tough it is and how catchy, pristine, and out there…ad naseum. The guitar parts alone are the highlight of this platter.

Things kind of level out there through "Compound Life," "Live or Die," and "Dume," all of which have their shining moments, like the dark charging second half of "Live or Die" as it fades into nothing. Which leads us to the final bruising stitch that is "No Services."

In the past month I've spun this record so many times while prepping to pen this tome, that it's affixed itself to the fabric of what is my impending nervous breakdown, stemming from irresponsibility on my part and daily life in the filth and fancy that envelopes San Francisco like a parasitic fog. It sonically validates and rejects existence of "paradise"—proof that every darkness has its comfortable corner, and every light, its blinding stress. I can honestly say, without a reasonable doubt, that this, my friends, is a perfect punk record. Maybe you picked up on all that?

****

The feeling of anticipation I referenced in the early part of this column is still fresh in my mind after witnessing DESTINO FINAL tear the motherfucking house down two Fridays in a row, at both Burnt Ramen and SUB-Mission. Their set at the SUB-Mission show was, without a doubt, one of the top-three most furious and intense sets I have seen in the 14 years I've been going to hardcore shows. Barcelona, I hope you can appreciate what you've got with this band. Hell, there are so many sick bands in Spain these days.

Outro:

-ENGLISH DOGS *To the Ends of the Earth.*

-Upcoming MÖRPHEME / D-CLONE split!

-Two new CROW records!

-Can't wait to see SKITKIDS and AI.

-There are a few fairly common records I'm after, so if you have access to any MASSKONTROLL records (even the *Warpath* 7" on Havoc), MISERY records (except *Children of War* 7"), HEALTH HAZARD / SAWN OFF split 7", STATE OF FEAR *Wallow in Squallor* 7", or the second SUFFER 7" that you don't need, get at me: blindjustin78@gmail.com. Eventually, you will find this column at deadstareforlife.blogspot.com, which I plan on doing more with in the very near future. Toodles.

Ultimately it was a communication glitch. A good friend of mine asked very politely if *all* our most intimate fights could stop appearing in print—and really he had a point. It was all very "You know you love me, bitch. Chill out." There were very practical points.

A) It's not fair cause he's not psycho enough to do it, and B) What if he *was* psycho enough? Oh shit. Like the shoe on the other foot? Uncle!!! I vowed never to do it again (even though technically I'm doing it now).

It made me think of the shit-talking crowd in general. *Vultures.* It also made me think about how I too am part of the problem/solution. I stay high on pot and consequently I'm paranoid as *fuck.* The idea of an abundance of people who don't know me talking shit on me makes me want to roll an *even bigger* fattie, climb in a hole and not come out for three weeks—until I have something artistic to say "Fuck you!" to the world with. I'm like a pre-historic German cave man. But wait a minute—this isn't *paranoia,* this is my *life*! (I really do these things.)

A spiritual guide of sorts told me that to in order to solve a problem you have to stay on its ass *constantly.* And in order to solve communication problems, you don't "not talk." you talk more. But of course language is often a tricky thing, and so you sit tongue-tied, you talk until you lose track of what you were fighting about, talk until you're too tired to shit talk.

This will work for you, but what of the shit talkers? I have a reputable psychic counselor from Alabama, and she doesn't fuck around. She gave me knowledge, which I'm giving you for *free* because I love you. Feel free to use this anytime the Mother Fuckers are on your ass. Feel free to use it against the one who told you about it. To make no harm come upon you, she said burn a candle, but you can also just wish nothing bad happens (that works too).

How to keep Mother Fuckers off of you:

Write their names seven times in red ink on a piece of paper and fold it up *tiny.* (Say "Fuck that Mother Fucker" while you write it.)

Put it in a sandwich bag with water.

Freeze that shit in a paper bag and this will cause the imbalance that will keep you from being "talked about."

and also

How to run a Mother Fucker off:

Take an egg that's "straight from the chickens butt."

Write their name seven times and write "run" three times after it.

(Say "Fuck that Mother Fucker" while you write it).

Stand on the edge of a non-landlocked body of water, turn around, and throw it over your left shoulder.

Keep saying "Fuck that Mother Fucker."

Use this power often and without hesitation.

love,

brontez

This month I'd like to talk about a record that changed my life—but first a quick aside. For many years, fashion, advertising and other culture industries have pillaged the punk scene. The iconic style of punk record covers and fanzines is now part of the advertising mainstream. We see misappropriated punk iconography used all the time in fashion and advertising. There are punk band logos used out of context in designer clothing and advertising, and I'm told there was even a Code 13 T-shirt on MTV.

I've always hated this kind of parasitic feeding off the creativity of punk, but felt there was little I could do to protest. One group that doesn't have this problem is the Hells Angels. I don't want to support or condone the activities of the Hells Angels in any way. However, they are well known for quickly shutting down *any* use of their logo, colors or symbolism.

There have been two well-known incidents locally where the Angels got pretty bent out of shape over this kind of thing. Most recently when a local band used a photo of a Hells Angel with their logo photoshopped onto the back of his vest to promote a show. The Angels ordered all the flyers torn down and brought to them immediately. Part of me wishes the Code 13 Fiend Club had wielded this sort of power and showed up at MTV with bats and chains and ordered all the videos destroyed and T-shirts handed over.

Now, a record that changed my life: In the early '80s I was really into peace/anarcho punk. Mostly the English bands like Crass, Flux of Pink Indians, Rudimentary Peni, Conflict and the like. I used to order from Disorder, Toxic Shock, Rat Cage and other mail order houses—all the

releases on Crass, Spiderleg, Bluurg, Mortarhate and Corpus Christi—and follow the reviews and scene reports in this magazine. One 7" I ordered on recommendation from a friend was by the Kronstadt Uprising. This EP has yet to be re issued and it's pretty standard (but great!) noisy, pounding UK anarcho punk in the Flux/Crass tradition. While I dug the music and lyrics and the brief anarcho essay about the symbolism of the Black Flag, what got me was the record cover, band name and title.

Why was there a picture of a sailor with a rifle reaching for the sun? What did Kronstadt Uprising mean, and what was Unknown about this revolution? This being 20 odd years before Google, I asked the guys from local band Hate From Ignorance, and found out it had something to do with the Russian revolution. I skated to the public library and started pulling books off the shelf that had never been checked out and read voraciously. I learned that there had been an anarchist movement long before 1977.

Beyond the information on anarchism gleaned from punk 7" covers, I found a book, *The Anarchists*, by James Joll, which had a fairly informative chapter on the Russian Revolution. Many years before AK Press and the internet, much of the information in the early '80s about the anarchist movement dated either from the '20s or the late-'60s "new left" era. I did learn that the title "Unkown Revolution" came from a book by Voline, a Russian anarchist who escaped after the revolution to write a history of the era in exile.

The cover artwork of the Krontstadt Uprising 7" is based on a revolution-era Russian propaganda poster, *Red Fleet, vanguard of the Revolution*. The band name refers to the uprising of the Baltic Fleet sailors against the repressive Bolshevik regime in 1921. The Baltic Fleet sailors had been some of the most radical elements in the revolution, who felt betrayed at the dictatorial nature of the Bolshevik state and rose in revolt only to be crushed by Trotsky and the authoritarian Bolshevik regime.

All of this left me intrigued. In the early '80s the USSR was still going strong and there was minimal information about the Russian Revolution taught in schools. These days I think most people under 30 only know the USSR from *Saturday Night Live* skits and the like. But as a young radical punk rocker I was fascinated with past periods of unrest. I read a lot about the Spanish Civil War, the radical anti-war movement of the '60s (especially the Weathermen)—but most of all I became fascinated with the Russian Revolution.

Because of this 7" and the curiosity it imparted, I wound up utterly absorbed with late-19th and early 20th century Russian history. When I started reading about the Makhnovist movement—first in the seminal Spain Rodriguez cartoon in *Anarchy Comix*, later in Arshinov and Voline's works—I got really hooked. The radical anarchist movement of revolutionary Ukraine seemed like such a contrast to the wishy washy activist scene of the early '80s, which was made up mostly of burned-out holdovers from the '60s. I wound up majoring in Russian history in college and going on a study abroad term to the then-USSR in 1991.

Then end of the Cold War and collapse of the USSR and then Russian economy meant there was little job market for young people educated in Russian studies, and I wound up in the construction field instead. However, I've had a keen interest in Russian history ever since those first obscure references on the Kronstadt Uprising 7".

The Russian Revolution was one of the most important events of the 20th century and literally changed the course of history, briefly for the better, later for the worse. While much-studied in the 20th century, it seems today to be fading into obscurity. The post-Soviet era seems to have led to a "goodbye to all that" mentality toward the whole Soviet era.

As most of us know, the Tsarist regime of the early 20th century was a somewhat medieval anachronism in a rapidly modernizing Europe. The revolution of 1905 rent open the social fabric to reveal the level of unrest and desperation on the part of the peasants and workers. At the same time, it showed that the regime could only maintain its grip on power through a massive repressive apparatus.

The disastrous Russian experience in the WWI only heightened the unrest and further exposed the bankruptcy of the old regime. Few were surprised when in 1917 the Tsar was toppled. The revolution was genuinely popular and came from the bottom up. The upper classes tried to maintain control of the situation through a bourgeois democratic provisional government, but by July of 1917, popular unrest was pushing forward and overthrow of the new order in the name of the Soviets.

The misappropriation of the term "Soviet" is one of the great injustices of the revolutionary era. The Soviet (the word means "council") was originally a local body of democratic self-government. It was an instrument through which common people, recently enfranchised, could elect representatives to municipal and national decision-making bodies that would directly represent the people. There was a mass movement toward worker control of industry and peasant seizure of the land from the nobility. The authoritarian Bolshevik party of Lenin opportunistically rode the wave of popular unrest by co-opting the slogan "All Power to the Soviets." Lenin was probably the most masterful politician of the 20th century. He had an amazing knack for sensing the popular will and launched his fringe authoritarian party into power by telling people what they wanted to hear.

The Bolsheviks seized power in a coup d'etat in November 1917, overthrowing the provisional government in the name of the Soviets. However, soon after gaining power they began to institute repressive measures and stifle the democratic institutions they claimed to represent. It is often forgotten that some of the first victims of the "Red Terror" were not the representatives of the old regime, but the Bolsheviks' critics on the left, the most radical anarchists and social revolutionaries who dared to criticize the centralizing, authoritarian and anti-democratic nature of the new regime.

In the spring of 1918, civil war broke out in Russia and continued until 1921. This war, little known in the West, was perhaps more influential on the course of Russian history than the revolution itself. While most histories focus on the civil war as one between "white" reaction and the "red" Bolsheviks, there was considerable unrest in the land from people who resisted both the restoration of the old regime and the new dictatorship. Foremost, among these was the partisan movement, led by Nestor Makhno in Southern Ukraine.

Makhno had been imprisoned for radical activities after the 1905 revolution and wasn't released until 1917. He returned to his home village in Ukraine and began to help the local people organize and overthrow the existing regime there. This social revolution spread, and soon much of the area around the village of Gulyai Polye was effectively liberated from control of any outside government or authority. In this area a radical social experiment took place—not to be repeated until the Spanish Revoution—and never since. Society was reorganized on democratic principles, with the people governing themselves.

Because this happened during a time of war, there was less than a year for the revolution to develop before the people had to take up arms first against the "white" counter-revolutionaries, then against the "red" Bolsheviks who sought to re-exert Moscow's control over Ukraine. The Makhnovist movement was crushed, but a few of its principle organizers escaped into exile, leaving a document of this fascinating era.

In 1921, the aforementioned Kronstadt sailors, who had been the vanguard of the revolution, rebelled in the name of "Soviets without communism," giving voice to the will of many Russian people who had risen up against the authority of the Tsarist order, only to see it replaced by the dictatorial Bolshevik regime. The uprising was brutally crushed, and Russia descended into authoritarian one-party rule for decades.

Since I have long been fascinated by this era, I'd like to recommend a few books that anyone who wants to learn more might check out.

Paul Avrich has written a number of books, *The Russian Anarchists*, *Kronstadt 1921* and *Russian Rebels*, which give a sympathetic and comprehensive overview to the libertarian left movement in Russia. For a more general study of the Russian Revolution, the classic is W.H. Chamberlain's two volume series, although quite dated, is still a good read. More contemporary and readable would be W. Bruce Linconl's *Trilogy in War's Dark Shadow*, *Passage Through Armageddon* and *Red Victory*.

Perhaps the most current and well thought-out single volume though, is Orlando Figes *A Peoples Tragedy*. Figes was in the papers recently when Putin's Chekists in St. Petersburg confiscated his research materials on the Stalinist regime. There are a number of good books about the Makhnovist movement, notably Skidra's *Anarchy's Cossack* and the memoirs of Arshinov and Voline, who were participants. Ewan Mawdsley's book is probably the best single vol-

ume study of the Russian Civil War. Once you start to delve into the Russian Revolution and Civil War, you will find enough areas of interest to keep you reading for many years. Here I am, over 20 years after having my curiosity stoked by a 7" cover, still writing about it.

I was daydreaming about the perfect burrito when the tire blew.

It was at the precise moment I had decided that cilantro was indeed crucial to the ultimate harmony of flavor perfection that the van roared and shuddered violently beneath us.

We later concluded that the loose gravel on the road contributed heavily to why Heather lost control and we tumbled off the road and down the embankment. I remember her clear and absurd calm when she said, "Here we go!" as the van spun around and tipped over the edge.

That moment of terror and hysteria is a strange kind of memory. It was so loud, the rumbling crunching of the van, I know it was, but my memory of it is somehow one of still and quiet terror, frozen in the moment just before the tumbling began.

We had been deep in a cranky silence before the accident. Five and a half weeks into tour we had settled into a dysfunctional truce, fundamentally still friends, but sick of everything about each other. I don't remember if we had been fighting really, but I remember the tension in the van. No one was speaking in the long dark stretch of Texas on the way to El Paso. We had all retreated into our respective heads for some much-needed alone time that we could not really have for a few more days.

Eating enough on tour is a perpetual struggle for me. Because vegan eats are few and far between on the road, I make-do with every variety of fried potato. I am always thinking about our next meal, and if it will prominently feature the color green. Sometimes on tour I dream about grilled tempeh and big green salads with California avocados (those Florida imposters are fucking garbage, btw). Once I woke myself up ordering a sandwich out loud. So it's no surprise that I was thinking about food at that crucial moment.

As the van was falling off the road, I had time to be terrified, to brace my arms in front of my face, call Paul's name and laugh as I thought, "I can't believe my last real thoughts are going to be about food."

I was the only one with out a seat belt on, so I tumbled a bit more than the rest. When we landed on our side I was scrunched upside down and buried in the loose contents of the van: corn nuts, dirt, socks, sunscreen, a piece of the high-hat stand, among other things. Sliding down the embankment with our windows open also threw tons of dirt and shredded truck tires in with us too. When we stopped sliding, the dirt cloud in the car made it so I couldn't tell which way was up, or where anyone was.

There was another moment of absolute still, of anxious terrifying stillness, before we began to call out for each other. Dan's muffled, "Herrre" was spoken into the side of my knee and I found I was sitting upside down on top of him.

We crawled out the passenger-side window into the warm clear summer night. We stretched out our limbs, patted ourselves down looking for injuries. Everyone was okay. Dirty and shaken, but fine. My only injuries were a knock on the head and some rug burns on my elbows from tumbling against the car interior.

The couple in the car behind us who had called the ambulance and climbed down to see if we were all right found us hugging and verging on tears. I touched Paul's face and told him I loved him as the fluids from the engine seeped out the top of the car and down the hill toward us in a shining black mass.

Some of the most important people in my life were in that van with me, and knowing they were OK, that we could have very easily not been so lucky, that I could have lost any of them was a totally sobering and simultaneously scary thought.

I was shaking for at least an hour.

We caught a ride with the highway patrolman to a small motel in the closest town, and the tow truck driver promised to pick us up to survey the damage early the next morning. After settling our dirty scraped-up selves in the motel, we formed a much-needed beer expedition.

The gas station mini-mart refused to sell to us because while we were waiting in line with our 12-pack it had passed the legal time to purchase alcohol. We explained that we had been in line in time, that we'd flipped our car off the road, but to no avail, the heartless and harpy queen of that particular mini-mart would not budge. So we walked back to our motel. All in need of winding down, still a little trembly and high from our brush with death.

We took long hot showers, ate candy, and sat near each other on the lumpy beds while watching bad television. We worried about how we would get home if the van was wrecked. The room buzzed with a different kind of tension now: a mix of shock, adrenaline, and a deep satisfaction in being alive.

We made some phone calls to friends to relate our scary tale, and uncertain future. The sweetest response of all was from Will, who immediately offered to pick up us—and all our gear—if the van was indeed totaled. "Just let me know, and I'll come get you."

And though it turned out in the end we were able to drive home after duct taping the side-mirrors back on, refilling the engine fluids and replacing the tires and rims, it was nice to know that we had real friends, people who loved us, and that we loved each other still, despite the long and tense time on the road. We drove the crumpled van home, and after it safely carried us there it was junked. The shop determined it would cost more than the thing was worth to fix everything we had broken, and that sooner than later it would give up altogether.

It's so easy to get caught up in petty daily life annoyances and bullshit. It's easy to lose sight of the big picture. But I'd much rather my last thoughts are about friends and love and family, and not how annoyed and hungry I am.

Sometimes when I'm eating a burrito I get this strange overwhelming feeling that there isn't much time left—that I should take a step back and enjoy life, and value those around me, because I could go at any moment.

Send your gnarly near-death tour stories to: Ariel Awesome, PO Box 301 Berkeley, CA 94701. Electronic mail to arielawesome@gmail.com. Also, check out arielawesome.blogspot.com for an archive of these columns, and things that are more blog-like.

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

Oi cunt! The purse strings are getting tighter everywhere, as I have less disposable income to drop on records, so excuse the lack of content in the last couple of months. The inevitable decay of the monetary system in the face of widespread unemployment (due to technological innovation making service industry jobs obsolete) and lack of consumer spending (as these recently retrenched ex-servants have nothing left to spend or borrow) has its downsides sometimes, you know?

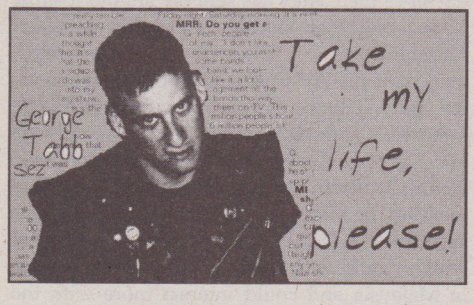
If you speak French, you should endeavor to check out Mr. Alex Simon's fanzine *Ratcharge*. It's the best-looking hardcore fanzine in the world at the moment, publishing as often as *MRR* it seems, but it's all written in some foreign gibberish I cannot begin to decipher. I know I jacked off over this zine a couple of issues back, but since then, Alex has sent me another couple issues, and that kinda work deserves repeat recognition. Latest issues include writing about the Australian hardcore phenomena, the life and times of San Francisco's FLIPPER, interviews with NZ's punk fucks SHORTLIVED and Los New Yorker 2009, Mr. Stuart Schrader. Definitely worth a couple of euro's. I should also mention the Malaysian punk rag *Dead Pigs*. It's a spectacular display of shit talking, most of which would entertain / enrage more if I lived in Malaysia and could interact more with the subjects of his vitriol, but this kind of shit works best when it's insular and is coated with an anti-outsider hostility. Malaysia has great food, generally safe road travel and fanzines with some fuckin' attitude.

Also on this month's fanzine roundup is *Deny Everything* from Adelaide, Australia. Much like *Dead Pigs*, *Deny Everything* is home to a great deal of shit talking that has rustled a few feathers here in the last couple of issues where editor

Lewis seems intent on provocation. It makes for a great read—especially when you don't agree with him. In the latest issue, Christian hardcore band DRY-ROT shares a few lines with Lewis, some records are dissected and dismissed. The overall feeling of this publication is best understood if you've ever lived in a shithole small town that crawls with disease and depravity.

Record of the month: Austrian hardcore band COLD WORLD gets the Shortfuse Records treatment, and it's a fucking blinder. As expected, the love for records is evident in the high-quality packaging when you hold this fucker. There are two versions of this record in circulation: The regular 7" is six songs of high speed, agitated power violent thrash, and the bonus 7" comes with remixes from some Euro techno types and Japanese noise creep MERZBOW. Weird, right? The whole thing is a fucking exceptional record in any case, but this bonus record is a bit of a mind blower. Aces.

Cassette of the month: Melbourne band WASTED TRUTH has released their second tape in a year, and it's the same crawling sludge punk, this time with a great lo fi recording that captures the paranoia and hypersensitive nature of bands like NO TREND that are obviously being paid tribute here. The guitar sound is perfect LA 1981 and the drum sound is perfect New York 1966. The combination is a total fuckin' draaaaaaaaaag man. This is the sound of 2009: totally bummed music, exhausted with the daily media torture of swine flu, terrorism, oil crises, inflation, banks raping, dead dogs coming back to life to tear flesh from your throat, baths overflowing with sewer sludge, footage of the World Trade Center when the bombs go off and the floors start collapsing, Gaza Strip decimation, plastic surgery reality television.
If you play music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, get in touch. My address is: DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239 / NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA / 3054 AUSTRALIA. If you'd like to email me, try distorttheworld@gmail.com.



"Kids, my stepfather, Nick, used to say, "too young for some things and too old for others."

I never understood what he meant until I started dating a 17-year-old named Michelle.

I ran into her recently and she's still as beautiful as she was back then. When dinosaurs and man shared the planet.

***

"I don't wanna go to school today," whined Michelle as she ate her bowl of Fruit Loops and skim milk.

"But you have to," I told her. "You have to do well so you can get into a good college. Playing hooky is not gonna help you get good grades."

Michelle just frowned at me.

"What?" I asked the pouting kid in front of me.

"Nothing," she said.

I again asked her what was wrong. "You don't love me," she answered. "If you really loved me, you'd let me stay home again."

I looked at her. She was beautiful. Spiky black hair, rings on all her fingers, a smile that, well, melted my heart.

"You have to go in today," I told her, "And I do love you." I was really tempted to let her stay home again and watch cartoons. Her face really lit up when she watched those—especially that Scooby-Do.

"Well," she said, "if I do go in today, you'll write me a note? An excuse for yesterday?"

I told her that I would, to get me a piece of paper and a pen, to hurry up and finish her cereal, and then I'd take her up to the Yeshiva myself. She smiled, and kissed me on the cheek.

Kids.

On the way up to school that day in the cab, Michelle and I got into a major fight. Well, actually, the fight started on the way out of my parents' apartment, where I was living at the time, and continued throughout the taxi ride. It ended as she got out of the cab, told me that I wasn't her father, that she liked a certain skinhead, and that I couldn't tell her what to do.

I told her to just get to first period on time, and we'd deal with this after school. She stuck her tongue out at me, once again reminded me I wasn't her father, whom she didn't like, and went into the big red brick building. I told her to have a good day, but she ignored me.

Kids. I was glad I wasn't her father. But being her boyfriend was no treat, either.

***

I think I first met Michelle at this dive of a club called Tin Pan Alley. It was located on like 49th Street or something, and was run by these two lesbian women who really liked my band at the time, The False Prophets. We used to play there a lot, and got paid pretty well too.

Of course, I never saw any of the money. It all went back into the "band fund." The other guys in the group told me that the money was used for things like transportation, mailings and phone bills for booking shows. But I kind of doubted it. I think it was used to keep drummers in the band, so they wouldn't quit every few weeks. The False Prophets had a habit of losing drummers. Not that that's hard to do.

So, that night I was sitting at the bar, drinking a Budweiser, talking to one of the women owners of the place, and trying to convince her that my other band, Letch Patrol, was not sexist, racist, or homophobic in anyway.

See, Tin Pan Alley prided itself on having bands with a "good attitude." Bands that said and believed in the right things—the politically correct things. So I really wanted Letch Patrol to play there. I mean, it was easy for False Prophets to play there, since all our lyrics were about how the government sucks, and about how certain people are oppressed, and other such nonsense. But Letch Patrol? Our lyrics went much deeper than that. We sang about virgins in black, and about killing our girlfriends. Of course Tin Pan Alley would have none of that. But it was fun to try, anyway.

"George," I hear a voice behind me say. I turn around and see Stephen, lead singer of The False Prophets. His nails are over a foot long on one hand, and all curled up and painted black and stuff. His mustache looks like the one worn by Hitler, and he is wearing the same black leather pants that he has been wearing for the last month.

"Hi Stephen," I say to the mustached and nailed creature.

"Hi George," he says back to me.

I like Stephen. We had been in the band together for quiet a while, and I really grew to like him despite his wacky appearance. He had a heart of gold, and would give anyone the shirt off his back—or the pants off his legs. Not that anyone would want them. They smelled horrible.

"George," says Stephen, as he waves his nailed hand in the air, "I have someone who wants to meet you."

I look at Stephen's nails and wonder if he is a righty or a lefty, and how the hell he wipes his ass.

"Who?" I ask him, sort of disinterested.

The last person Stephen introduced me to was this old commie guy with really bad breath and a stupid beret on his head. The guy wanted us to play some festival up in the South Bronx, and somehow we agreed to do it. He told us it was to help the people up there help themselves. As it turned out, the only thing we helped them do was get the cops more angry at them than they already were, and make their lives more miserable. Between all the bands that played that day, these balding guys with wire frame glasses and berets would tell the crowd that they should fight the police and accept Marxism as the way the government should be run. Then they tried to sell them these commie books and stuff before they went home to their comfortable East Village homes. I remember holding that bad-breathed friend of Stephen's against the cement wall of the men's room and telling him that if he ever lied to us again about his motives, I'd fucking flush his commie ass down the toilet and use his beret to wipe my ass—or Stephen's.

"This is Michelle," said Stephen to me as I stared at his Freddy Kruger hand. I looked at whom he was pointing at. It was a girl. She looked to be around 20, and had spiky black hair, lots of make up, beautiful brown eyes, a smile of pure innocence and a black dress that made her look elegant, yet playful.

"I'm George," I said to her, with a little quiver in my always smooth and manly voice. She was gorgeous.

"Hi George," she said, and I detected a little Long Island or Brooklyn Jewish accent hidden in there. "I'm Michelle Goldburg," she added.

"A Jew?" I asked her.

Stephen answered, "God bless you."

"Yes," she answered, kind of laughing. "In fact, my father is a rabbi."

So I made some joke about circumcisions or something and she laughed. And I liked her laugh. It was, well, cute.

Anyway, the night went on, and I was not successful in convincing the bar to let Letch Patrol play the club. In fact, I may have hurt The False Prophet's chances of playing there again. I kind of told the bartender-owner woman that she thought she was so smart, but I bet she didn't know about all the porno magazines we had in our van. I think Stephen overheard my conversation with her that night, cause he wouldn't give me any more drink tickets. Putz.

As we played our set, Michelle stood right up front and watched me play the whole time. I'd look up from my fingers on my classic Peavey guitar and see her eyes looking into mine. I'd smile at her, just for a second, and then put on my mean and angry and furious face again. She'd just hint at a smile, and her lips would move ever so slightly. It was very sexy.

After the show, as we were all packing up our equipment, Michelle came walking up to me. "I better be going," she said, in a way that begged for me to tell her not to do so.

"Don't go," I correctly answered.

"But I have school in the morning, and I have to get home," she explained to me. I figured she went to college, and who cares about missing those classes, anyway.

"Skip school," I said to her, "after we move our equipment, maybe we could go out for a drink or something."

"But I really have to go to class," she said again, but I could tell she really didn't want to. At all.

"Okay," I said to her, "We'll go out for a quick drink".

She said okay.

We moved all our shit back to our studio on Avenue B, and I took Michelle out for a drink. Somehow it came up that she lived way the fuck out in Brooklyn, so I offered her my place for the night. Well, it wasn't really my place. It was my parents'. I lived there with them: in a small one-bedroom on West Fourth Street. They had to walk through my room to get to the bathroom.

I explained all this to Michelle, about my parents' house and all, and she said she'd love to stay over. And that she felt safer that my parents were around, anyway. I told her I was glad she'd stay over, and I'd set the alarm for her for school. She asked me what my parents would think if they saw her there. I told her my parents were used to me bringing home strays. She just looked at me funny.

We got back to my parents' apartment, and I set up an extra mattress on the floor for Michelle while she took a shower. She came out of the bathroom in an extra-large Ramones T-shirt of mine, and she looked really cute. I then took a shower and was surprised to find her in my bed when I got out. She reminded me to set the alarm for her, and I did so, telling her that I'd probably wake up from my mom getting ready for work in a couple of hours, anyway.

I'd always wake up when my mom got ready for work: every morning at about six o'clock.

Actually, sometimes she didn't wake me up. That was because I'd be up from the night before. On her way to the bathroom she'd see me watching TV and eating Grape-Nuts. I loved those crunchy things. She'd ask me how my night was, wanting me to tell her everything, kinda like moms do.

I'd tell her as she sat on the edge of my bed, hanging on every word. But sometimes, if I was already asleep, I'd wake up and hear her in the bathroom, turning the water on and off, listening to 1010 WINS radio. And I'd smell all that hairspray and cigarette smoke. I miss those smells. I miss her.

So, I get into bed with Michelle, and she starts to make-out with me. We kinda fool around a little, and have lots of fun. She is very playful, like a little puppy, and I hardly get any sleep.

Somehow we both manage to snooze through my mom and stepdad going off to work, and I can only imagine them standing there, over my bed, shaking their heads as they see black spiky hair sticking out from underneath the covers, with my head next to it.

I wake up and realize that the alarm didn't work. I shake Michelle awake, and tell her of my discovery. She says not to worry about it and that she is allowed to be late every once in a while. We kinda make out a little, and then I hop in the shower, and then she does the same. I ask her when she gets out of the shower where her school is located. She tells me, "Uptown." I ask her where, and she tells me around 32nd Street, on the East Side. I tell her I know of no colleges up there, only F.I.T., and that is on the West Side.

She giggles and tells me she goes to the women's Yeshiva High School. I feel my heart start to do flips, like an Olympic gymnast. I imagine the rest of my organs watching my heart, holding up little signs that read "8.7, 9.1, 9.5, 8.7, and 9.6".

Not bad, I think.

"You go to high school?" I ask her, more than a bit shocked.

She just laughs. "Of course I do, silly boy," she answers me.

"9.6, 9.8, 9.8, 9.85, and 10.0." My heart is going for the gold.

"What grade are you in?" I ask her, afraid of her answer. She tells me she is in the 10th grade. I then ask her *the* question.

"How old are you?"

She answers very calmly, "Seventeen."

"10.0, 10.0, 10.0, 10.0, and 10.0." I win the gold.

I imagine my heart standing on the top pedestal, while my other organs stand below it, taking the silver and the bronze. My heart makes some kind of speech about how it worked very hard to get here, but couldn't have done it without the arteries and veins.

"Seventeen!" I exclaim, "You are 17 years old?" I look at Michelle. Her lower lip starts to quiver, and I see tears building up in her puppy dog eyes. She starts crying. I find myself hugging her and kissing her forehead, and telling her everything will be okay. Finally she stops crying, and I give her a tissue to blow her nose.

"You don't want to see me anymore, do you?" she says, trying not to start crying again.

I look at her. She is beautiful, has a great figure, and a wonderful disposition. Kinda like an Irish setter my dad once owned.

"Well," I say, "you are kinda young and…"

"Would you see me if I was 18?" she interrupted.

I thought about it. Then she'd only be 8 years younger than me. "Okay," I said to her. "I'll see you when you are 18."

She smiled.

"Okay, I'll see you next Friday night, it's my birthday!"

Doh.

***

The following Friday I meet her in the East Village, on First Avenue and Tenth Street at a bar called "Downtown Beirut." A real shithole that I liked to hang out at, where I used to get lots of free drinks. As I walk into the place, I see Michelle, and her eyes light up when she sees me, and the bundle of flowers I have for her for her birthday. She runs to me, hugs me, and tells me how much she missed me.

Of course we end up back at my parents' apartment, and this time we "go all the way." Afterward, she tells me that she never had sex like that before. I ask her what she means, and she tells me that I am her first. Well, not really her first, she explains. She tells me about some guy she had met about six months ago in Washington Square Park, but he turned out to be a jerk and drug dealer. She tells me that she never, ever felt like this before, and then her lower lip starts to quiver. I spend the next two hours kissing her forehead, and telling her it is "OK."

The next night, when my parents come home from work, they ask me about the "new" girl I am seeing. I tell them her name is Michelle, and that she is very nice. My mom says that she got a good look at her while we were sleeping, and isn't she a bit on the young side. I explain to my mom that she is 18, but acts, well, like she is, um, 18. My mom giggles. Then Nick, my stepdad, tells me I am finally dating women my intellectual age.

We both laugh.

I start to see Michelle a lot more, and she starts to spend a lot of time at my parents' apartment with me. My mom and Nick get to know her pretty well, and I guess they liked her. I remember once my mom saying that she'd let her stay because she felt guilty for not ever letting me get a puppy.

Days turned into weeks, and Michelle stayed at my house a lot on school nights. I asked her a lot if her dad minded, and she told me that her, and her father, the rabbi, didn't get along very well. She told me that I was like her family now.

Whatever.

So every morning it was the same. My parents would wake up and go to work, then Michelle and I would get up, and I'd drop her off at first period on my way to work, which was located kinda near her school. I worked at my mom's office in Midtown, as a receptionist and

typist. Every afternoon, around 2:30 or so, when Michelle got out of class, she'd come visit me at work. She'd sit in the reception area reading magazines while I pretended to actually do work. She'd smile and wink at me, and sometimes hike up her dress a little. All the guys I worked with, most of them in their late 40s and 50s, would tell me that she was a "princess" and that I was the luckiest guy alive. I'd just smile at them and nod my head.

I was the office stud.

"How long can this really go on?" Nick asked once, while Michelle was out of the house at Planned Parenthood, trying to go on the pill. I told Nick that I didn't know, but it sure was fun. Nick asked me how much fun I was having, and I told him a lot.

"You're lying to me," said Nick. Somehow he always seemed to know. I explained to him that he was right, and I was kinda getting sick of only having conversations about which teachers sucked, and how algebra was not meant for humans to understand. I told him I needed more stimulation. He just laughed and said it seems to be you are getting enough of that. And again he was right.

Michelle was like, well, a nympho. Well, not really. She was just 18. And all girls that age who are sexually active just always wanna do it.

Which is a great thing.

Really.

But it can tire the hell out of you.

I remember doing it like three or four times a night. She really wore the shit out of me. I used to get all sore and stuff, and it'd hurt if she even touched it. I think that is when she discovered oral sex. I remember her using her mouth on me for the first time. She kept using it and using it. I begged for her to stop, that I was tired, and was a human being, not a piston, damnit, but she wouldn't listen: she just kept going and going like the Energizer Bunny until I climaxed. Then she immediately called her friend, Rita, on the phone, whom she always talked to, and told her she did it. From what Michelle answered, I assume Rita asked her what she did, because Michelle announced proudly that she'd given her first blowjob.

Kids.

So the sex was really great, and I really did think it was cute that she liked to measure me with a ruler all the time and tell her friends about it, but everything else started to sort of go downhill. We did enjoy watching cartoons together, and even cried together after we rented *Mask*, but, well, I think we both needed more. And I think we were both getting on each other's nerves.

I'd tell her every morning that she should really go to school, and she'd tell me that I wasn't her father, and I couldn't tell her what to do. I'd explain the importance of an education, and then she'd tell me that I shouldn't be talking, that I had dropped out of college a couple of credits short of graduating. I'd tell her that that was different, that I was old enough to make that kind of decision, and then we'd have the big fight about age, where she told me she was old enough to think for herself. I'd tell her she still had a lot to learn and then she'd start crying and tell me that I didn't love her enough. We'd always kiss and hug and make up, which usually meant more wear and tear on my sexual organ. It was getting to be a routine.

One morning while Michelle and I were arguing in the kitchen, I heard my parents listening in on our moron conversation and giggling. This particular morning, Michelle was telling me that today she was not going to go to school and that I had to write her an excuse again, because I was of age, and therefore could be considered her legal guardian. I told her that I would do no such thing, and today she was going to get her cute little ass to school, and that she had missed enough of it, already. She told me that if I didn't write her a note, that she'd tell her dad about us, and I'd go jail. I told her that she was of legal age, even though I didn't know if she was. She then told me that it was fine if I didn't write her a note, she'd just go date this skinhead guy she met at CBGB who really liked her. The whole time this was going on, I heard Nick giggling, and my mom saying, "Sssssshhhh!"

The next morning, after lots of making up the previous night, Michelle and I had our final blowout. She was eating a bowl of Fruit Loops and skim milk, and telling me that she wouldn't go to school. Finally I convinced her to do so, and wrote her a note for missing school the previous day. She had asked me if I loved her, and I told her I did. Everything seemed to be going normally until she found a letter I had received from my old girlfriend in Florida. She opened it and read it. Then she accused me of having an affair. I explained that the girl lived in Florida, and it was impossible. She said that I was probably visiting her on the days that she would spend with her father. I told her, yeah, I was flying down there on the drop of a hat because I wasn't having enough sex with her. Then her lip started to quiver, and I tried to explain as fast as I could that I was being sarcastic. Of course I couldn't speak fast enough, and the tears poured out.

After pacifying her in the usual way, I got her into a cab, and took her up to school. All the way up there she told me that I wasn't her father, and that since I was having an affair, she'd date this skinhead guy from CBGB. I told her we'd talk about it after school, but she just stuck out her tongue at me upon exiting the taxi.

That afternoon we broke up. Michelle came to work, and made me leave with her. Some of the old guys saw her, and the way she glared and pouted at me. I remember one guy whispering in my ear, "Gravy train's over." I left with her and returned to my parents' apartment.

Once there, Michelle quickly packed up all her stuff into one bag. She packed up all her school books, her tooth brush, her tampons, her crayons and the sexy underwear we'd purchased together at The Pink Pussycat. I asked her where she was going, and she said to find that skinhead guy.

I suppose I could have fought with her and tried to win her back. I could have told her not to leave me, that I loved her, and then we could have had sex again. But it would have happened sooner or later. We just weren't right for one another.

I was much older than her, and not enough of a bad boy. Although I really did care about her, I knew she needed someone to tell her it was okay to skip school. She needed someone who would cause lots of trouble, and really make her dad, the rabbi, scared. She needed to rebel. I figured the skinhead was a good start. As she walked out the door of my parents apartment that day, with her bag over her shoulder, I knew I'd miss her.

***

I ran into Michelle a few years later.

Well, more than a few.

She looked great.

Her once black spiky hair is now long and beautiful. Her body has developed into one that any woman would be proud to possess, and her smile still has its disarming qualities. She told me that she now gets along fine with her dad, the rabbi.

She has finished college, and now wants to meet a nice Jewish guy to marry and move to the suburbs with. She also told me that she has many good memories of the time we spent together, and I told her I felt the same way. She then asked me what I was doing these days, and I told her that I was still playing punk rock. She asked me if young girls still came and saw me play, and I said "Yes." She smiled. And as I stood there, looking at her, remembering everything, it was me who had the lower lip that started to quiver.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. furygeo@aol.com
2. The new Blackout Shopper's CD, *Pass Out*, is fucking awesome! Get this!!! If just for the first song, "Spunk Taxi"!
Fucking Punk Rock!!!!!! Best band currently in New York!
3. The new Guitar Hero game, *Metallica*, is awesome. I saw Metallica back in 1982 when they were first starting and Dave Mustaine was in the band. This game brings back those memories, and is fun as hell as long as you ignore every song past "The Black Album." Also, you can play as "Lemmy" from Motorhead and rock out to "Ace Of Spades." Playing this, I just know there is gonna be a "Punk Rock" one soon, and that' s fine with me. I can't wait to jump around my living room fake-playing Ramones and Clash covers. Hey wait—I do that in real life! Punk Rock!
4. *Suikoden Tiekreis* is a kick ass game for the Nintendo DS I find myself deeply involved with. I *LOVE* this game. I usually hate RPG's, but this one, well, in the game I am "George from the Punk Rock clan of swordsman"! Yee Haw!!!
5. Finally, 505 games has released some cool kid games for the Nintendo DS (my favorite gaming system). They are tied in with the *The Discovery Channel*, and quite fun and you learn a lot. Great gifts for the young ones! *Discovery Dolphins* and *Discovery Kids Puppy Playtime* are awesome. The graphics are cool and really sharp, but what I really like is you *learn* so much cool shit. Oh, and the puppy one: you have to learn to train a puppy. And it feels *very real*! I think it's a great thing for kids and adults alike who want to know what it's like to have a dog before getting one. And if you are gonna get one, *please*, try and res-

cue it from a shelter. There are so many great dogs out there and so many bad owners—and dogs are man's best friend for a reason. Don't treat them bad…like those Emo kids!

American soldiers serving in Vietnam wondered what they were fighting for. U.S. troops in Afghanistan don't have that problem. They know exactly what they're fighting for: rapists.

After President Obama's coming "Afghan surge" there will be 72,000 soldiers in Afghanistan. Their primary mission is to prevent Afghans from overthrowing the unpopular regime of Hamid Karzai, the former oil consultant installed by George W. Bush when the US occupation began nearly eight years ago.

America's media repeatedly claimed that Afghan women would be better off under the US-supported Northern Alliance puppet government headed by Karzai than under the Taliban. But when I went to Afghanistan and asked women what they thought, they had a different story. The defeat of the Taliban brought about the collapse of law and order, making life even more dangerous, especially for women. "Under the Taliban," a woman told me, "I watched rapists being executed. Now I see them in the government."

The Afghan women's rights group RAWA has repeatedly told anyone willing to listen that there hasn't been much improvement for women and girls since the U.S. occupation began in 2001. But no one—least of all left-of-center Americans eager to embrace the Afghan war—has wanted to hear what they had to say. "Most women still wear the all-encompassing burqa through fear of attack and social pressure, a third of women in Kabul do not leave the house, forbidden from doing so by the male members of the family, and it is still almost impossible for women to get a divorce," reported *The Sunday Herald* in 2005.

Liberal Democrats who cling to Afghanistan as "the good war" the US should be fighting are being forced to confront the ugly truth about their ally. Karzai has signed a law that states that "women cannot leave the house without their husbands' permission, that they can only seek work, education or visit the doctor with their husbands' permission, and that they cannot refuse their husband sex," reported the British newspaper *The Guardian* on March 31st.

The Shiite Personal Status act applies only to devotees of the Shia branch of Islam, which account for between 10 and 20 percent of the population. How can a secular democratic state have different laws depending on a citizen's faith? The answer is: It can't. Afghanistan isn't secular or democratic. The "new" Afghanistan's constitution is based on Sharia law—exactly as it was under the Taliban. But the US media has purposefully failed to report the icky truth about our ally.

The new law requires women to have sex with their husbands at least once every four days unless they are sick or menstruating. "Obedience, readiness for intercourse and not leaving the house without the permission of the husband are the duties of the wife," reads the law of a nation ostensibly invaded by US troops in part to liberate Afghan women. "As long as the husband is not traveling, he has the right to have sexual intercourse with his wife every fourth night," it says.

Afghan Senator Humaira Namati calls the rape bill "worse than during the Taliban" and said it was rammed through parliament without debate. "Anyone who spoke out was accused of being against Islam," she said. Several hundred women protesting the law on the streets of Kabul were viciously assaulted by men as police stood back and watched.

In fairness to the responsible male legislators, they did add a provision to protect Shiite women from "dead bed": Afghan men have to put out "at least once every four months."

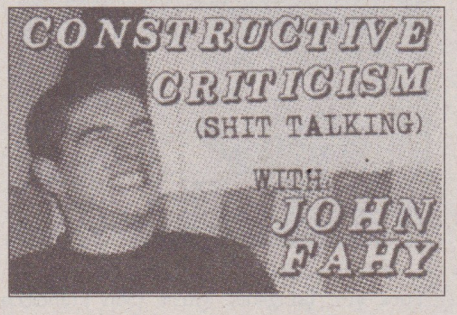
Karzai signed legalized rape into law in order to appease right-wing legislators in an election year. After international criticism, however, he began backpedaling with the lamest of all possible reasons: he didn't read the bill before he was for it.

"I was not aware of what I had signed," Afghan parliamentarian Sabrina Saqib said Karzai told her. The legislation "has so many articles," Karzai told CNN. "Now I have instructed, in consultation with clergy of the country, that the law be revised and any article that is not in keeping with the Afghan constitution and Islamic Sharia must be removed from this law."

As Karzai BSes for the cameras, hundreds of Afghan women languish in prisons around the country. Their crime? They're teen brides, some as young as ten, who ran away from much older husbands who purchased them. "In President Hamid Karzai's Afghanistan, women are still imprisoned for running away from home," reports The Sunday Herald.

Nice theocracy you got there, Mullah Karzai.

Remember this column the next time you watch a flag-draped coffin returning from Afghanistan. The young man inside that box didn't die for nothing. He died to protect rapists.



Exit Strategy for Former Punks –or– Where Have all the Mantooths Gone?

So you say you "don't really go to shows anymore." You "don't really keep up on any of the new bands." Let's face it—you're about ready to pull the plug on this whole punk thing. It has been fun, but you're over it. You may need a change of pace, or you're just sick of the whole damn scene. Either way, you're getting out. Now you'll need a plan. You're going to look like a hypocrite after saying some of the things you said about people "selling out" and all. *Your* sell-out will need to look like it's anything but. This is where I come in. There are a variety of ways to make your departure seem legit (even 2 Legit). I will show you. Read on...

Becoming the "Metal Guy:"

You've already been listening to some punk and hardcore devoid of real ideas anyway, so listening to some black metal with sketchy or irrelevant lyrics really won't be much of a stretch. Making this transition will involve you being seen more often reading *Short, Fast & Loud* and less often reading *MRR* or even *Give Me Back*. Get with it. Phase out the bands you listen to that have ideas and heart—you were really just here for some sick riffs anyway, right?

The metal ghetto will still placate your needs for aggressive music, but it will also serve your want to be lazier. Also, you won't have to pay lip service to any ideals you never gave a fuck about in the first place. Phew!

Future: Discuss punk music/community in condescending, "I've graduated" tone only. Get a mediocre job that will take your badly tattooed ass. Smoke weed. Forget.

Killed by the Kids –or– Denial—Not Just a River in Egypt:

This method has been tried and tested by the most used-to-be-die-hard punks out there. This tactic involves you claiming that punk has lost its value and changed for the worse, while you stay true to the old, formerly good punk. You're not selling out and leaving—*punk* is. Things aren't the same as they used to be. DIY has lost its way, even though you've tried your best to shepherd it back to its old self. These damn kids just aren't the same!

Sure, shows are still five bucks, 7"s are still three, but I don't know…it hasn't stayed true to itself. It's not you, it's us.

Future: Climb into your time machine and set it for 1997. Or, just go to the bar and talk about when things were good with other has-beens. Continue to keep it real with no impact whatsoever. If you have a band, continue to play only at bars to friends who understand, and avoid DIY channels at all costs.

The Straight-up Sellout:

This is for people who don't want to defend their flight from hardcore and simply want to own-up to not being into it anymore. This method involves simply stopping all involvement in the punk scene and when asked why, telling the truth; being ready for a "normal" life, career, etc. You want all of this too, but you don't want to be labeled as a deserter or traitor so you will not go this way—you're going to go kicking and screaming. Fuck it. Forget I even said this one. Leave it for the people who weren't as down for the 'core as you were.

Future: You know, regular.

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Punk:

The hardcore scene simply hasn't kept up with your taste for truly antagonistic music. You started that band where your friend played the hammer and frying pan while you played the Black & Decker drill and some other nerd hollered out of a walkie-talkie. That approached the level of highly subversive art that you want to create, but didn't completely do it. You're going to need to completely submerge yourself in the world of dickhead artists to find what you're looking for, because god knows you're not going to find it in the mediocrity of punk and hardcore! Sam McPheeters paved the road for this one.

Future: Retail: whatever avenue you choose. There's one thing all departees will agree on: Punk and hardcore stopped being viable and cool the minute you left! So why do these new bands keep springing up in blatant defiance of your lifestyle change? I've got several new demos from exactly the kinds of brats you can't stand…

Fuck the New Bloods.

SLAVE SCENE – Demo Tape:

SLAVE SCENE has not been around very long, and already they're poised to put out an EP on Deranged Records. SLAVE SCENE has members of several other incestuous Tampa bands, such as CULT RITUAL, DIVISIONS and BODY ROT. The music is best-described as very noisy punk rock with distorted vocals. The most apt comparison I've heard is Vermiform's *Towel*. There are some damn catchy songs on here—especially the A-side's "Factory Heaven." The artwork is great, and the tapes themselves were pressed with bright yellow shells. This demo may be sold out, but it looks like it will be pressed to vinyl shortly.

BODY ROT - *We're All Pink On The Inside* demo tape:

Once again, the incestuous Tampa scene puts out an awesome demo by another awesome new band. This has Samantha from SLAVE SCENE (and *Walk the Plank Pussycat* zine) and Zack from CULT RITUAL (and *The Inevitable Teenage Overdose* zine) playing bass and guitar over drum-machine tracks. Recently saw them, minus the drum machine, and plus David Vasalotti doing percussion, and it was an awesome set of unsettling noise punk that had some danceable moments and sass backing it up.

Seven songs bleed into one another, full of lyrics that describe pathetic creatures and situations. Pink shell tapes, beautiful artwork once again on the inserts and covers. These kids are putting together another tape very soon, so be ready and don't miss out—if it sounds like the set I heard, it's going to be killer.

POLLUTION - *nasty.DNA* demo tape:

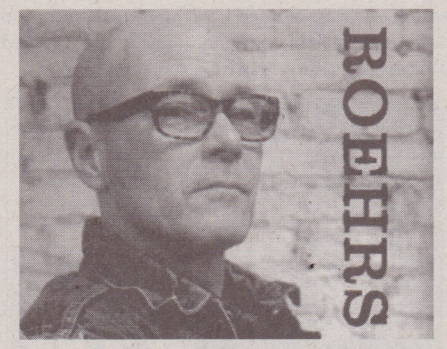
One of the best new bands I've found in quite some time. This is tortured, ominous-sounding hardcore with lyrics that match-up perfectly. Eight songs are included, the best being "Tiny.Black.Burns," "Failure" and "Shock.No exist." I ordered this tape after reading the demo reviews in this very magazine (one of the best sections of *MRR* as of late).

Dan Goetz described this as being alternately like RORSCHACH, SWANS and BORN AGAINST. Sold! After listening, that is a pretty damn good description. The noisy qualities of BORN AGAINST are there, the terror and hopelessness of SWANS is certainly present, and the punch of RORSCHACH makes this a fucking bulldozer of a demo. Lyrics are included, artwork looks great. All in all, this is a superb demo and this band is going to put out some killer records. (I think this demo is long gone, but don't be surprised if it gets pressed to vinyl as well.)

Next month I'll have more demos (that you and I hopefully won't fuck up and miss out on) by DOWNSIDED (Miami) and NAZI DUST (Tampa). I hope I've been some help. Exit orderly and peacefully.

ENDNOTES:

1. By the time this prints, my new band's demo will be out. We are called PANZRAM, and our demo has six-ish songs and costs four bucks ppd. Send moneys to me: fahy_john@hotmail.com or John Fahy / 15011 Lakeside View Drive / Apt. 2402 / Fort Myers, FL / 33919.
2. Also, another band I'm in has a new record out: MERKIT/RESURRECTIONISTS split 7". Five bucks ppd! RESURRECTIONISTS play that devastating Bremen-sounding, heavy, grinding hardcore shit that will make you shit your teeth out.
3. Why don't I have the new PUNCH LP? Because I'm a moron. So instead I've been buying every damn Chris Bickel record that I don't have and can get my hands on, including the *Irritainment* LP by GUYANA PUNCH LINE, and *The Nutty Anti-Christ* LP by IN/HUMANITY. These are great records that everyone should own.
4. POLLUTION can be reached at pollution.c6@gmail.com. BODY ROT and SLAVE SCENE can be reached through cultmaternal.blogspot.com.
5. My real life Web site now works! www.humancrushrecordings.com. Also, el blog: www.humancrushrecordings.blogspot.com. All new music I'm involved in will be put up on both sites as well as anything the label releases. The blog will have additional miscellaneous mp3s.
6. Check out the new *MRR* site, it's awesome.



DEAD BROKE IN THE USA

Fuck yes! Longshot Music (San Francisco, California, USA) in conjunction with True Force Records (Madrid, Spain) has released a skinhead masterpiece! The band is called ROUGH STUFF hailing from Japan. The music on the 45rpm 7" is traditional Oi! from the LAST RESORT/4-SKINS school of British skinhead anthems. These 2 tracks are immediate skinhead rock classics. Side one kicks you in the head with the muscular Oi! jewel "Out Of Control." This mid-tempo song has all the proper elements in place: great vocals, tasteful guitar chug and superior bass playing and drumming! This is a fucking excellent song! "Out Of Control" is melodic Oi! and it retains the danger of being on the street! Side two continues the well-crafted skinhead rock excitement! "Anti Politician" gets geared up for the punks and skins right from the get go! The harmonies and the blistering guitars sweep you away! This song is so goddamn infectious you will be singing along by the second verse. This is an amazing example of top-shelf Japanese Oi!. Order your copy from: Longshot Music, 980 Harrison Street, San Francisco, CA 94107, www.myspace.com/longshotmusic or True Force Records, Apartado de Correos 42117, CP 28080, Madrid, Spain, www.myspace.com/trueforcerecords.

Mike Josephson and his Longshot Music is on a roll this month and in conjunction with Joe Pogo Records from East Syracuse, NY have released a magnificent 2x7" EP package for you punks and skins! Side A of record one features one of Australia's leading skinhead bands MARCHING ORDERS doing "Mass Hysteria." Fucking excellent! For the one-two punch on side A you are treated to those Canadian skin stalwarts ALTERNATE ACTION. Fuck yes! Greg and ALTERNATE ACTION crash out of society's chains with the powerful street anthem "Skinhead Way Of Life." Yes! This is over-the-top skinhead rock'n'roll for you true bootboys! Side B of record one I the Streetpunk & Disorderly 2009 double EP features Bay Area favorites HARRINGTON SAINTS. These guys are fucking playing at the top of their game! With Darrel on vocals, Jayson on guitar, Mike on lead guitar and Forry on drums, the HARRINGTON SAINTS produce an instant Oi! classic with their tune "Dead Broke In The USA." This skinhead anthem is so damn catchy you will be singing along with your beer mug raised up in the air! The HARRINGTON SAINTS have rightfully taken their place at the very top of the Northern California skinhead food chain! Vocals, guitar, drums and bass coalesce—everything comes together just right on the HARRINGTON SAINTS song! The last band on the Longshot Music entry of this double EP is SECRET ARMY from Barcelona, Spain. Fuck yes! SECRET ARMY kicks a shit-load of skinhead butt on their "Hypocrites and Parasites" song! Ruben's vocals have the gruff Oi! authority that makes skinhead music so damn exciting! Ruben slashes along on guitar with Iñaki providing back-up vocals and great bass playing! Willy drums with conviction and holds the whole package together! The SECRET ARMY "Hypocrites & Parasites" song is a strong bit of skinhead rock. You must listen to this!

Record two of this fine double EP is led off by BAD CO. PROJECT from Berlin, Germany. This is good sing-along melodic punk similar to VOICE OF A GENERATION or DROPKICK

MURPHYS. At the helm of BAD CO. PROJECT is Sucker on vocals who you will recognize from OXYMORON. "The Kids Of The Nation" song has all the hooks and harmonies you would expect from a project like this. Next up are fellow Berlin punk veterans TOWERBLOCKS. These men have been kicking around the punk/skinhead scene for quite awhile and have built a solid reputation for themselves. Like PÖBEL UND GESOCKS, TOWERBLOCKS have a polished delivery while retaining their skinhead/punk street credibility. With this many years under their belts they have the respect of their countrymen and have established a fanbase all over Europe. Side two of the second record in the *Streetpunk and Disorderly* 2009 EP starts with well-honed punk rock supplied by THE ANALOGS from Poland. On their song "Lzy Mojego Miasta", THE ANALOGS get in a comfortable punk groove with refined singalong parts. To finish up this fine eight-band double EP endeavor we have none other than the mighty KLASSE KRIMINALE! Along with THE OPPRESSED, KLASSE KRIMINALE are one of the most esteemed anti-fascist Oi! bands on the entire planet!! With superior musicianship, excellent song-writing and brilliant vocals, KLASSE KRIMINALE are certainly an Italian skinhead treasure! The track is entitled "Non E Un Gioco" ("It's Not A Game"). The song is sung in Italian but Klasse Kriminale has translated it for us Americans who are not bilingual. In "It's Not A Game" the band sings: "You think it is good for us from birth to death to see only bullshit and lies. / They will not change the truth. / It's not a game and you know it! / What do you want to do now? / Going around with your new gang. / They only want to satisfy their hate and frustration." Fuck yes! KLASSE KRIMINALE write intelligent lyrics and backs it up with top-notch Oi! music! KLASSE KRIMINALE remain one of the best skinhead bands to ever play! For your Streetpunk & Disorderly 2009 compilation contact: Longshot Music (same as above) or Joe Pogo Records, PO Box 281, East Syracuse, NY 13057, www.joepogorecords.com

Fuck yes! Reaper Records from Liverpool, New York has five new hardcore storm-trooper slabs for you this month! First you get BORN FROM PAIN with their *Warfare* EP. This fucker comes charging out of the chute with a great NY-style hardcore slam that would make MADBALL take respectful notice. BORN FROM PAIN start with "Sound Of Survival." The lyrics are as powerful as the hardcore riffs – "This is the day of judgment. / This is the time to come. / Crisis upon crisis. / Pounding til we're done. / This is the sound of survival. / This is the sound of the truth. / This is your world coming down on you!" Very good! You plow through more blackened pessimism with song two, "State Of Mind." On side B you get "Sons Of A Dying World." BORN FROM PAIN sings: "This is a time of do or die. / Bred on hate… Trapped in fear, trapped in despair. / Future's dark, heading nowhere." That's bleak shit! Song two on side B, "The Wolves Are Loose" features some intricate guitar leads. The metal-laced guitar playing on this record will hold your attention all the way through! The final track on the BORN FROM PAIN EP is "Zeitgeist" with lyrics like: "Veiled in lies… So complete the siege… Seeping through only at the seams. / Never get a glimpse of what it could be. / Choked in a world that's changed." This is very good metallic hardcore!

The second hardcore Reaper Records blast for you fucks this month is a great EP by NAYSAYER. This bad-ass Richmond, Virginia hardcore crew just fucking tears you a new asshole! These fucks harness a superior, slower, death-riddled metal hardcore locomotive destruction. A favorable comparison could be made to label-mates TERROR from Southern California. Side A of the "No Remorse" EP by NAYSAYER starts with a great song "Overstand." After a slow intro, NAYSAYER destroys you with lyrics such as: "There's one thing you need to know – you won't string me along anymore. / I'm not holding anything back this time. / Life is pain and no one's safe. / When I see you look the other way – how does it feel to be so fucking fake? / This fucking cesspool has got me drowning in hate." Fuck yes!! You surge through "Affliction" with these words: "I'm losing my faith in humanity" and then slam right into "Twisted Game." Read on: " Do what I gotta do – Just to get by. / Do what I gotta do – Just to survive. / Think of all the times you lied. / Now there's no turning back. / Burned my bridges – I'm not making amends. / Decisions been made – Lines been drawn in the sand. / Only time will tell – In this twisted game." Fuck! Those are good lyrics! On side B you crash through "So Be It" where you'll hear words like: "Nothing left but hate." Then comes "Peace Of Mind" and finally you arrive at "Soul Searching" with lyrics such as: " I fell victim to your fucking games. / Fool myself into thinking you still care. / The truth is you were never there. / This isn't good bye – this is I hate you." Fuck yes! Those are some bitter feelings! This record is very good!

Reaper Records presents two massive hardcore attacks by infamous hardcore champions TERROR. First you have a limited four-song TERROR EP entitled *The Rise Of The Poisoned Youth – Blood Tracks Demos*. This gem crushes you with "Iron Mind", "Betrayer", "Rise Of The Poisoned Youth" and "Never Alone." The recording is quite clear and eminently listenable. Very good and essential for the TERROR completist!! The biggest treat for you TERROR fans is the magnificent new picture disc of "The Damned And The Shamed." This disc has amazing artwork on side A with a good picture of the band on side B. The hardcore music on this behemoth is damn near mind-boggling. TERROR kicks ass right from the get go with "Voice Of The Damned." This is fast, blistering hardcore! Some of the lyrics go like this: "We found our place beneath your world. / We always go against the grain. / We're the damaged, forgotten, disposed of. / All the filth, all the waste… / We are the lost, the damned, we are the shamed." Fucking brutal!! We slug along with "Relentless Through And Through" and "Betrayed" and get to the great song "Rise Of The Poisoned Youth." Read some of this: "I don't need love or forgiveness. / This you cant touch – fade to the distance. / Turn struggles to strength – it's my fuse." Fucking brilliant! The guitars chug along at a furious clip! Continuing on side A you get prime examples of the best hardcore available in these United States with "Never Alone", "What I Despise" and end with "Let Me Sink" with succinct lyrics such as: "I always fuck up the best things. / Empty pockets, no future for me. / Don't ask me if I'm OK. / Just live your life and let me sink." Those are hardbitten words. On side B TERROR churn through "Feel The Pain" and get to the killer "Lost Our Minds." Read part of this: "They show no mercy. / Age of destruction. / These are violent times. / Running, running for our lives. / And I think we've lost our minds." Fucking great! You will proceed with "March To Redemption", "Crush What's Weak" and "Still Believe?" to arrive at the finale, "Suffer, To Return Harder." Cipher out some of these thoughts: "I've felt addiction, I've felt addiction to ugly and weak. / Seen some of the best die so young. / I've done things that sicken me. / Can't show regret, nothing to say. / This world never wanted me. / I've stepped on the ones I love. / Seen friends take their own lives. / With the bottle I'd drown the pain." Those are intelligent, well written lyrics! The hardcore music on this disc is ferocious with great vocals and guitar playing! You need this handsome picture disc at your house!

The final record you must order from Reaper Records this month is the hardcore compilation *Mercy For None*. This is a slice of some of the hardest of hardcore bands out there right now! The record starts out with a slow and menacing number by the aforementioned NAYSAYER and then segues into a slightly more up-tempo but threatening song by BAD SEED called "Harsh Reality." The third band on side one is ABSOLUTE MADNESS. These fuckers really fucking stoke the furnace with their metallic-thrash hardcore masterpiece "Frozen Face." The guitars go off like scud missiles on this fucker! Side two of the "Mercy For None" compilation begins with some edgy and urgent hardcore by UNFORGIVEN with "Switching Sides." This monster of a song rumbles along at a dangerously slow clip. The UNFORGIVEN take no prisoners. Next up is BRICK with "Human Hand, Devil's Mind." Very good! The band ALPHA OMEGA wrap thing up nicely with "Faded Path." This compilation is consistently good from start to finish. Every band holds up their end of the deal! For your TERROR, NAYSAYER, BORN FROM PAIN records and the 6-band "Mercy For None" hardcore compilation, contact: Reaper Records, PO Box 2935, Liverpool, NY 13089, USA, www.reaper-records.com

WARTORN from Wisconsin opened up a fucking stellar punk rock show for the mighty HELLSHOCK from Portland, Oregon in Berkeley, California recently. WARTORN ripped through "Father Son", "Weight Of The World", "Prey For Salvation" into "Killing Frost", then "Overdose", "Tainting Tomorrow With The Blood Of Yesterday" (the title track of the new LP) and finally "Aftermath Of A Severed

toured extensively with HELLSHOCK and these two bands compliment each other very well! WARTORN continues to gain strength as they write new music and travel all around the United States. WARTORN is a punk force to be reckoned with! You must see this band with all this raw power at their disposal! HELLSHOCK stunned the enthusiastic crowd with one of the strongest sets of punk music ever performed at Gilman Street Project. After their recent trip to Japan, HELLSHOCK is on a complete roll! There is no stopping these men—they command the dominant position in their field of music. No one even comes close to challenging HELLSHOCK as masters of this bleak punk universe. HELLSHOCK absolutely crushed the punks and skins with a set list from Hell. HELLSHOCK started with two new songs, "Let 'Em Stray" and "Low Men In Yellow Coats." Fucking great! Next you had a crowd favorite "Masquerade." This classic HELLSHOCK tune was followed by two more new numbers: "Tell Them It Ends Well" and "Dead Lights." These songs are friggin' brilliant! After HELLSHOCK cranked out "Wax Statues" and "Olympus" we were treated to another new song. This amazing track is called "Prisoner." Great! You punks are in luck! The "Prisoner" track is available on the new HG-Fact split 7" *Born Out Of Darkness* with HELLSHOCK and legendary Japanese punks AGE. Contact HG-Fact for your copy of this EP at: www.interq.or.jp.japan/hgfact/

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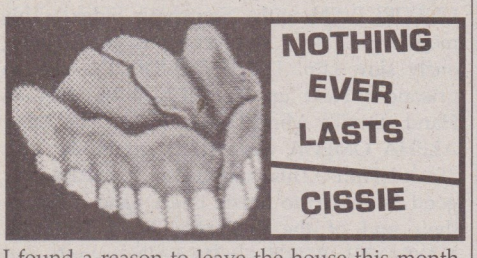
One last thing to come to my attention this month is the incredible new US version of the COCKSPARRER *Here We Stand* LP that has been out on Captain Oi! Records in England for quite some time now. You have heard me rave about this album in the past, and for all of you that didn't listen to me and didn't get your import copy yet, now you have no excuses!! I will tell you more about this beautiful package that includes a bonus DVD next month, after I'm back from seeing the almighty COCKSPARRER live in Texas!! Until next month – see you fucks at the bar.



I found a reason to leave the house this month when Barcelona, Spain's Destino Final played three Bay Area shows. I'd never heard them before the first time I went to see 'em—I was just relying on the fact that Destino Final is cut from the same cloth as Invasión, although sometimes assumptions like this lead to utter disappointment. After all, *La Caza* was my favorite 12" of last year, and could this new band possibly live up to my expectations? Well, I ended up going to all three Bay Area shows, so to say the least I was impressed.

Let me rewind for a minute. There are a few certainties concerning the history of hardcore punk that I feel the need to discuss. These certainties have nothing to do with right or wrong, they are simple undisputable facts. I'll forego any judgements based on one's choice in clothing and general ideology, because those things can be argued for eons with no resolve. What I wanna talk about is records and bands and the quality thereof. It's what I know. It's about all that I know. And ya wanna know what I know. Poison Idea's *Pick Your King* 7" is the best hardcore record every made—a fact that can't be disputed, so don't even try.

At the very least I listen to *Pick Your King* once a week and I've never gotten sick of it—the serrated guitar sound that probably mangled poor Pig's fingers, the gnarled bass tone that resounds of hostility, the drums that crash and crush all of one's ideals and dreams (no kidding), and let's not forget the best frontman in hardcore history. I've listened to this record a million times and I can't find one thing wrong with it. The songs are all great, the sequencing couldn't be any better, the recording and sound of the instruments is raw and utterly brilliant, the cover art is genius, and it contains thirteen songs of the densest, darkest, meanest hardcore punk ever committed to seven inches of vinyl. I think of hope when I hear this spiteful, dreary record. I feel hopeful, because I know that at some point in time there was someone that got it perfectly right, and that's bound to happen again eventually. And don't forget to read the lyric sheet and get it secretly tattooed on your inner right thigh. All of the answers to life's dilemmas can be found in the lyrics to "Pure Hate." It's indisputable and I don't think I could ever trust someone that doesn't like *Pick Your King*.

Black Flag came dangerously close to reaching the greatness of *Pick Your King* several times. *Nervous Breakdown*, *Jealous Again*, *Damaged*, and the '83 demos all have moments of genius, but unfortunately, Black Flag never released as flawless of a record. However, I've always found it best to not trust anyone that says they don't like Black Flag. After all, they are the most important hardcore band of all time. I assume that Black Flag has so many detractors because they are so renowned that people immediately assume they are overrated, but seriously folks, I don't understand how it is possible to not like Black Flag. If you don't like them I'd say it's time to have your ears overhauled or maybe you should consider an entire revision of your life. Every time I hear "Depression," "Nervous Breakdown," "Revenge," and the '83 demo version of "My War," I feel like my entire existence is justified. I have a reason for living.

It confounds me that there are people that have never had the luxury of having their world turned upside down by the music and ideology of the cult that is Black Flag. OK, I understand that may sound like a sheltered fourteen-year-old brat kinda remark. I mean I'm glad that most people aren't punks, but it is weird to meet people that have never even heard *of* Black Flag because the band is such a force and a world without Black Flag is not one that I want to live in. When I was a teenager there wasn't nearly as much press on the band as exists now (none of the books featuring the band had been written yet) and after hearing them for the first time I instantly wondered what went on in these folks' head. What kind of existence did these people live? They changed my life forever as they did for many others. They are the most essential hardcore band of all time, even though they can't claim to have the best hardcore record ever. And I don't trust anyone that doesn't like them.

With all of that said, I also don't trust people that claim that hardcore hasn't been exciting or worthwhile since the '80s. It's obvious anyone that makes such claims hasn't heard or seen Citizen's Arrest, Deathreat, Gauze, Born Dead Icons, Post Regiment, etc. I could go one for awhile because there's tons of great hardcore from the post-Reagan era, but the band I feel the greatest need to mention is Totalitär…the band that is the soundtrack to most of my walks around town. I can usually squeeze listening to three Totalitär 7"s while walking to work, and hearing them genuinely pumps me up and makes me able to cope with the annoyance and boredom of a routine life. If I have to do something I don't enjoy, at least I can listen to Totalitär on the way. They are the best hardcore band of the last decade. If you haven't heard them, I'd keep an eye out for their non-split LPs from Prank since those tend to pop up more often than their 7"s and split LPs, and I urge everyone to listen to them, because it is an undisputable fact that they have written some of the best riffs in hardcore history. If you've heard them and you don't like them, well I don't trust you. How can you possible deny the power of those riffs?

OK, so I saw Destino Final three times in the past month and I've had their new 12", *Atrapados* on repeat. At first, I wanted to argue with my friends that claimed that *Atrapados* was better than Invasión's *La Caza*. I mean, *La Caza* is such an overwhelming and intense record, and listening to it gives my more insane impulses something to latch onto. After a few listens I realized that *Atrapados* is in fact better than *La Caza*. There's more variety in the songwriting and the sound and mix of the instruments in spot on. It's a perfect hardcore record, which as we all know is no easy feat, and it blows my mind that it comes from a band that has only existed for like three months. I can play *Atrapados* after *Pick Your King* and it doesn't sound stale and lifeless. Destino Final is the best hardcore band currently going. As cheesy as it sounds, seeing them live was transcendent. Their music is not of the foot-tapping sort and they make that obvious and their point was taken. I have the bruises to prove it. While I realize that most people have not yet heard or seen Destino Final, if you have and you've been less than impressed with them, then I have to say that I don't believe you, and therefore I cannot trust you. Such is life.

****

Endnotes:

1. Playlist: Black Flag, Poison Idea, Totalitär, Destino Final. And some other shit too....

2. I just got word that the long-awaited Complications LP is about to come out and they'll be touring the west coast in October. Just thought I'd share the good news.

I am sitting in my room listening to Tuberculosis, raging female fronted hardcore punk from East LA, and thinking about what an idiot I was for missing them when they played up here with Rayos X (also from East LA) and San Francisco's own NN. It was, by everyone in attendance's account, the show of the year, and upon listening to this recording, it's clear that the weird random anti-social mindset that plagued me that night shoulda been contained... www.myspace.com/rawponxlosangeles is the website that will link you to these kids and their endlessly inspiring activities. A summer tour is planned, that they still need help with some dates; you should make them play your town!

Shit like that is super inspiring to me. Martin and Jose talked about playing the aforementioned show in the NN interview in the last issue of *MRR*, touching on the idea of punk as an exchange where kids and aging punks get equal inspiration from each other. Rather than one copy-catting the previous generation, and the other being bleary eyed grumpy old man style. Growing old and writing off what the kids are doing? Fuck the "good old days mentality!" That shit is weak, old-man-in-a-sports-bar-by-himself style. Complaint rock! I think what makes punk refreshing compared to other underground r'n'r movements is the aspect of theft, the idea you can take something and re-appropriate it in the subtext of your own life and idea of a good time. Forcing something new out of the old and stale. The post-card punks eternally frozen in time no longer exist; a tourist attraction is not punk. Replicating the past is for those historical re-enactment groups...

Sometimes it feels like the youth are willing to use their sound and scene as a stepping stone to some bogus pseudo-major label boredom, or sneaker sponsorship, but there are always pockets of kids that understand that punk isn't something you can package. That as soon as you do it loses meaning, becomes an image rather than an idea. It's depressing to me that the idea of doing something for your community, for reasons other than to make it big have lost currency in other circles. The mid-level indie rock doom of rock festivals, sponsored by sneaker and jean companies—is that what you do this for??? I just read this interview with Beth Ditto, of the Gossip, and while I think she makes a great pop-star, I am slightly irritated at the fact that she feels the need to dismiss the punk scene from whence she came as a collection of people who are achieving nothing because they're just "preaching to the choir." I personally do not have a set of goals that can only be achieved by becoming part of the tabloid consciousness, and the playing shows to shithead jocks and vacant trendsetters who just wanna party is also not in my "to do" list. I understand that having transgressive icons in mainstream pop culture is important, but I am not interested in participating in said culture, that's why I am a punk. That doesn't make what I'm doing insignificant...

I think it's also important for punks to be aware of the possibilities of what our culture has to offer, and to not take it for granted. To rise above being a shitty one-dimensional bro-dawg that disparages women and queers. The post ironic Mugger wannabe bro-mags attitude that seems so pervasive currently is tiresome and sometimes makes me wonder why I am still involved in punk. Here are some current reasons:

1)Destino Final Live and LP
2)Turboslut tape and tourzine
3)Zombie Dogz demo
4)Tuberculosis / Rayos X / Asko CDR sampler
5)Nuclear Family/Secret service demos Albany punx...
6)Foreign Objects demo
7)Mika Miko new LP
8)Skitkids!
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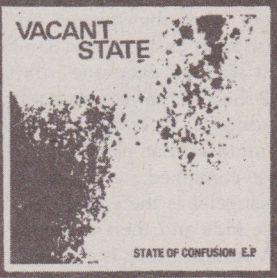

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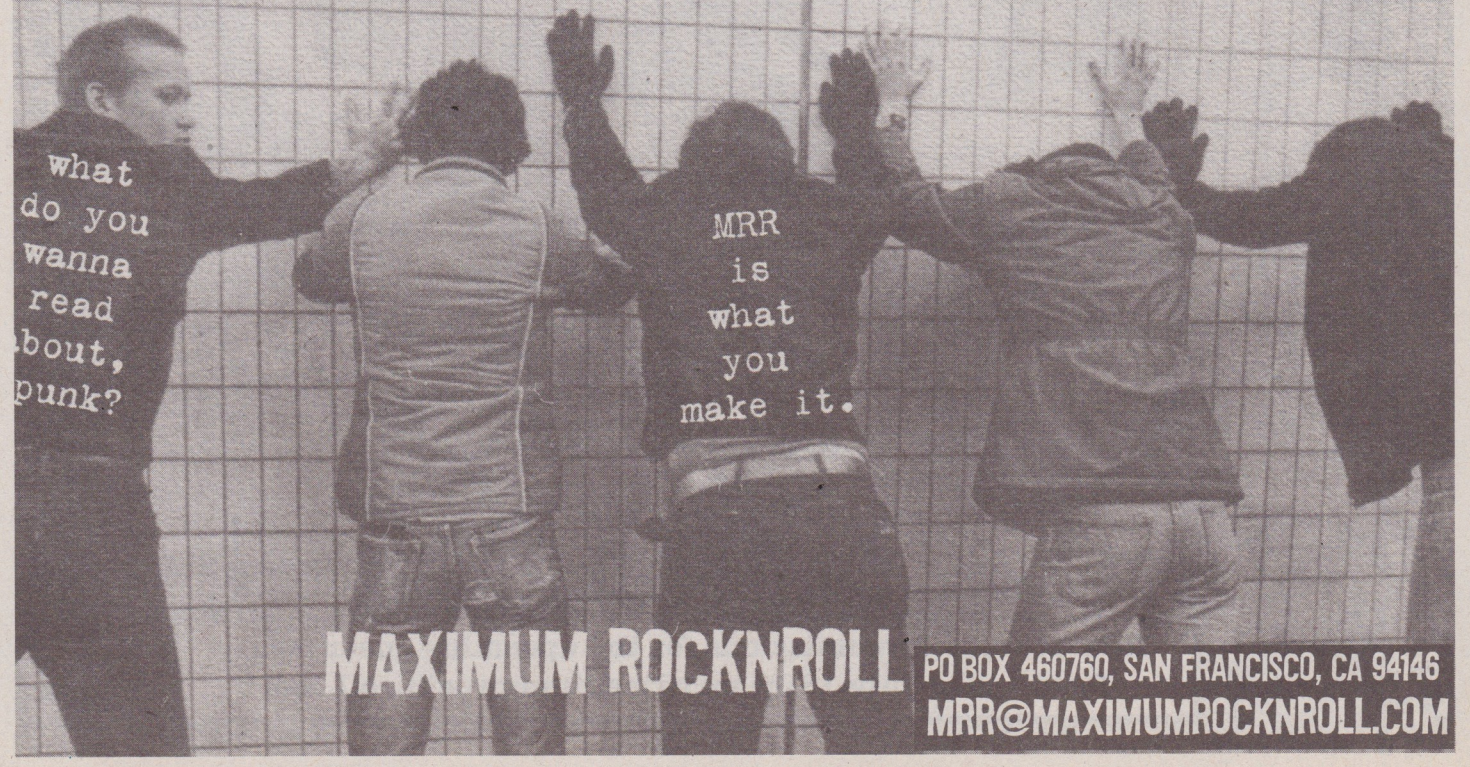

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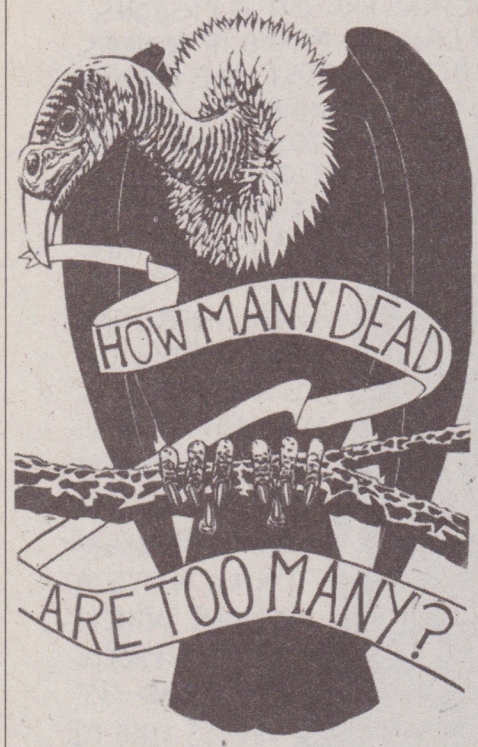

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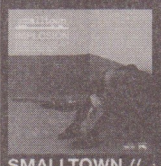

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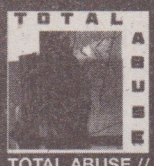

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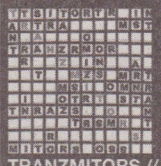

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NEWS

CALIFORNIA UPHOLDS GAY MARRIAGE BAN

From an article on commondreams.org

The California Supreme Court has upheld Proposition 8—the controversial ballot question that banned same-sex marriage. At the same time, the ruling will allow about 18,000 same-sex couples already married, to retain the rights they attained during the brief six-month period that gay marriage was legal in the state.

"There it goes," said Jim Schnobrich, who married his partner of 27 years in Pasadena, Calif., last September. "We have to keep going." Still, the couple, who have two children, aged 12 and 16, said that they are now in a "weird class," as the ruling preserved their 8-month-old same sex-marriage. "That's good news, but the bigger thing is that now we have this weird status that other people can't have. There is this kind of equality situation where people are maybe thinking we aren't really married."

Christian groups that applauded retention of the ban say that the ruling on those same-sex marriages could create a conflict—not only in the marital rights of Californians, but in adoption and income tax laws. "It's disappointing that the court will continue to uphold the legality of those who married during May to November of last year," said Bruce Hausknecht, judicial analyst for Focus on the Family in Action. "We don't know what the situation will be like, but it's likely to cause havoc in the courts as they try to deal with a class of individuals that look totally different."

Gay rights advocates, disappointed with the ruling, said their next step would be to "take it back to the voters," said Jennifer Pizer, director of the marriage equality project for Lambda Legal. Lambda has already launched an educational campaign, Marriage Watch California, that will specifically target the communities of color and diverse church groups, which overwhelmingly supported Proposition 8. "We will give education and legal support as part of a broad effort all over the state to provide greater visibility on why this issue is important and why there is no basis in the fear mongering from the other side," Pizer said.

The contentious campaign pitted gay rights activists against Christian church groups including the Mormons, who raised a record $83 million to pass the referendum. Justices considered a series of lawsuits to overturn the ban, which overruled a 4-3 June court decision that briefly legalized same-sex marriage. Those suits claim Proposition 8 was put on the ballot improperly.

Gay rights marches began early the next day as people prepared to be arrested in a mass demonstration of civil disobedience. The Family Equality Council, which has fought to overturn the gay marriage ban, said they will be organizing national grassroots protests in Day of Decision rallies.

Putting a new question on the ballot to legalize gay marriage could take months, and many gay advocates say it might not be viable until 2010 or later. "We have a lot of educating to do to convince [voters] that gays and lesbians are equal," said Lambda legal's Pizer. " It's very important that people agree on that point and that the people of California share that belief."

But Focus on the Family's Hausknecht said pro-Proposition 8 groups are already preparing their "talking points" for a new referendum on the issue. "How gay marriage effects my (tradtional) marriage is entirely the wrong question," he said. "The right question is how is gay marriage going to effect society in general and religious liberties and the rights of conscience?" "Across the country we've seen the impact on religious freedom, not just same sex marriage but nondiscrimination statutes," he said.

Waiting for the decision "has been an absolutely gut-wrenching experience," Molly McKay, a spokeswoman for Marriage Equality USA, told the Associated Press. "As Californians, we are all under tremendous strain worrying about the economy, our jobs and our families," she said. "On top of that, gay families have been living for months with the fear that the court will allow a bare majority of voters to strip gay and lesbian families of their constitutional protections and eliminate our —or just as bad, eliminate new couples' ability to get married."

Opponents of Proposition 8 argued that it revised the California's equal protection clause to such a dramatic degree that its sponsors needed the legislature's approval to submit it to voters. But several justices at a March hearing said they were skeptical of that argument and many legal experts say the Supreme Court would not likely undermine the state's citizen initiative process by reversing the gay marriage ban.

Since the passage of Proposition 8, gay marriage has gained momentum around the nation. Iowa, Maine, and Vermont have joined Massachusetts and Connecticut in recognizing same-sex couples. Similar proposals are under way in New Hampshire and New York. If California's court upholds the gay marriage ban, gay rights advocates hope to have it repealed in a 2012 ballot initiative. Groups have already begun raising money and airing television ads.

Gay Marriage, Adoption

If the justices strike down the lawsuits, Proposition 8 supporters could ask for a legislative proposal to limit marriage to between a man and a woman. The Democratic-controlled California Legislature has twice passed measures to legalize gay marriage, but they were vetoed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. With passage of Proposition 8, California amended its constitution to specify that only marriage between a man and a

woman is valid or recognized.

In June 2008, the state's Supreme Court overturned a gay marriage initiative. That decision allowed thousands of gays and lesbians to be legally married in that state; gay couples across the state decided not to take their chances, choosing to marry before voters took up the measure. The passage of Proposition 8 set off a backlash that rippled across state borders. Organizers used Internet sites such as Facebook to draw huge crowds from New York to Los Angeles and cities in between.

Advocates turned the vote on Proposition 8 into a countrywide referendum on gay rights, calling it "the new frontier in the civil rights movement." The protests lining the streets were a contrast to the joyful celebrations of same-sex weddings at city halls throughout California last summer. Those ceremonies were filled with a sense of hope and acceptance. Now that has given way to anger, defiance, and a war of words.

The Mormon Church has become one of the key targets of protestors after it was revealed that their members contributed millions of dollars to defeat gay marriage. Many like Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, a conservative Christian lobby based in Washington, joined in the fight to pass the ban, saying it was "more important than the presidential election." "We've picked bad presidents before, and we've survived as a nation," Perkins said. "But we will not survive if we lose the institution of marriage."

Advocates on both sides of the issue spent $83 million on the ballot campaign, the most ever on a social issue in the nation's history. "It's a staggering amount," said Matt Coles, director of the LGBT Project at the American Civil Liberties Union, which opposed the ban. "California is a cultural trendsetter. If voters decide same-sex couples can marry, it has an enormous influence."

Other states that had gay marriage on the ballot in 2008 included Arizona and Florida. Voters in both states passed measures to amend their constitutions to specify that only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage. In Arkansas, residents approved a measure aimed at preventing gay couples from adopting children. The measure, Proposed Initiative Act 1, goes further than just barring same-sex couples from adopting; it bars any individual cohabiting outside of a valid marriage from adopting or providing foster care to minors.

SRI LANKANS FACE "CATASTROPHE"

From an article on aljazeera.net

Sri Lankan civilians caught between warring government forces and Tamil separatists are facing "an unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe," the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has said. The assessment comes as the Sri Lankan military said that civilians continued to flee the combat zone under fire from Tamil Tiger forces using them as human shields. "Our staff are witnessing an unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe," Pierre Krahenbuhl, the director of operations at the ICRC, said. "No humanitarian organization can help them in the current circumstances. People are left to their own devices."

The Red Cross sent a ferry to the battle zone in an effort to deliver food aid and to evacuate the wounded, but it could not reach the coastline due to the continuing violence. "As fighting goes on unabated, civilians are forced to seek protection in hand-dug bunkers, making it even more difficult to fetch scarce drinking water and food," the ICRC said.

Civilians "flee"

At least 2,700 civilians waded across a lagoon while under fire from fighters from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), according to the military. Four civilians were killed and fourteen hurt as they attempted to cross the lagoon, which is currently a barrier between army forces and the LTTE, the military said. At least another 1,000 were waiting to cross as night fell, although darkness had made it difficult to tell, said Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, a spokesman for the military.

It is impossible to verify the military's claims as it has blocked independent access to the conflict zone. The LTTE has denied accusations by the military that civilians inside the war zone are being held as human shields and that they have opened fire on those trying to flee.

US presses IMF

Also, Hillary Clinton, the US secretary of state, said the International Monetary Fund should reconsider a $1.9bn loan for Sri Lanka. "We think it is not an appropriate time to consider that until there is a resolution of this conflict and that is what we are focused on," Clinton said in Washington. Clinton's comments came a day after president Barack Obama called on Sri Lanka's government to end "indiscriminate shelling" of civilian areas and for the Tamil Tigers to release civilians he said the group was holding in the area.

The Sri Lankan government has rejected calls for a ceasefire and the Tamil Tigers have refused to lay down their arms, despite being believed to be close to defeat in its 26-year battle for a separate Tamil homeland. The UN estimates that about 50,000 civilians remain trapped in the narrow strip of land still held by Tamil Tiger forces. Nearly 200,000 civilians have escaped the war zone in recent months and are being held in overwhelmed displacement camps. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in the war zone in the past month alone.

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AUGUSTO BOAL DIES AT 78

From an article in the New York Times

Augusto Boal, a Brazilian director and drama theorist who created interactive, politically expressive theater forms under the rubric of the Theater of the Oppressed, died May 2nd in Rio de Janeiro. He was 78.

The cause was respiratory failure, said Elisa Nunes, a spokeswoman for Hospital Samaritano in Rio, The Associated Press reported. Mr. Boal had been suffering from leukemia.

As both a theorist and a director, Mr. Boal (pronounced Bo-AHL) was especially intrigued by the relationship between the spectator and the actor, and his career was a steady march toward a greater partnership between the two. In his philosophy, life and theater are related enterprises; ordinary citizens are actors who are simply unaware of the play, and everyone can make theater, even the untrained. In his work the audience often became an active participant in the performance itself.

Theater of the Oppressed, which Mr. Boal created in the early 1970s, and which has become an international theater movement with adherents in more than 40 countries, is politically as well as artistically motivated. Its productions take aim at injustice, especially in communities, often poor or otherwise disenfranchised, that are traditionally voiceless. Over the years Mr. Boal developed it in various forms.

The movement, Brechtian in its social engagement, takes its name from Pedagogy of the Oppressed, a 1968 education manifesto by the philosopher Paulo Freire. It grew from Mr. Boal's work at the Arena Theater in São Paolo between 1955 and 1971. In the 1960s he created what he called Newspaper Theater; he and his colleagues would venture into factories and churches, encourage discussion of issues covered in the newspaper and help the residents dramatize them.

Variations on the theme followed. One was Invisible Theater, in which actors would, with seeming spontaneity, put on a prepared scene in a public place—a restaurant or a crowded square—that would inevitably engage the surrounding citizens. Another was Forum Theater, in which a play about a social problem turned out to be the beginning of a negotiation; audience members were encouraged to suggest different modes of resolution for the play and even to climb onstage to help enact them.

Considered a rabble-rouser by the Brazilian military junta, Mr. Boal was jailed for several months in 1971 and subsequently exiled. He lived in Argentina, Portugal, and France as his Theater of the Oppressed evolved, returning to Brazil after democratic rule was restored in 1985.

In the '90s he served for three years in the government of Rio de Janeiro, on the equivalent of the city council. There he applied his fundamental theatrical and political principle—that monologue is the tool of oppression, and dialogue the tool of democracy—to the work of government.

"This book attempts to show that all theater is necessarily political," he wrote in Theatre of the Oppressed, his influential theoretical work, published in 1974, "because all the activities of man are political, and theater is one of them."

Mr. Boal was born in Rio to Portuguese parents in 1931. He studied chemical engineering, but he was interested in drama from childhood, and that interest was fanned when he went to New York City in the early '50s. He attended Columbia University, where he studied both chemistry and playwriting, eventually putting on his first plays. He returned to Brazil in 1955 and, putting a scientific career aside, went to work at the Arena. His first work there as a director was an adaptation of John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men. "As I was not a director, I had no fear of directing," he recalled about his early efforts, according to a biographical study by Frances Babbage.

Mr. Boal was married twice. His survivors include his wife, Cecilia, and two sons, Julian and Fabian. Mr. Boal was also the author of many books, including Games for Actors and Non-Actors, which describes exercises and techniques for integrating performers and spectators, and an autobiography, Hamlet and the Baker's Son: My Life in Theatre and Politics.

An affable intellectual and an effervescent teacher, he was a theatrical Johnny Appleseed who spent his later years spreading his doctrines of the theater as a land of equal opportunity for professionals and nonprofessionals alike. "I think anyone can do theater," he said. "Even actors. And theater can be done everywhere. Even in a theater." Which is not to say he disdained conventional forms or the theater as a professional pursuit. Indeed, Mr. Boal directed the works of Shakespeare and other plays throughout his career. But he wished for more than the conventional, remarking in a 2005 television interview that in Hamlet, Shakespeare declared that theater was like a mirror held up to life.

"I think that's very nice," Mr. Boal said. "But I would like to have a mirror with some magic properties in which we could, if we don't like the image that we have in front of us, would allow us to penetrate into the mirror and transform our image and then come back with our image transformed."

HELP LIFT THE EXCHANGE SYRINGE BAN

HELP LIFT THE SYRINGE EXCHANGE BAN
A message from the Harm Reduction Coalition

It was no surprise that President Obama retained the language that prohibits spending federal funds on syringe exchange programs in the President's Fiscal Year 2010 Budget. We had been receiving that message since the inauguration.

Fortunately, Obama's disappointing inaction is not the major loss it might appear. The main mechanism for removing the ban is Congress, and currently the US House of Representatives. The timing for removal of the ban in the 2010 budget is NOW, as the Labor, Health and Education Appropriations bill, in which the ban lies, will be put together in the next couple of weeks. We have shown the support for its removal by getting co-sponsors onto HR 179, the Community AIDS & Hepatitis Act, and getting promises on votes from those who have not signed on but would support removing the ban in the Appropriations process. Obama says he supports lifting the ban, but has punted it back to Congress. Our response now is critical.

Truth is, we know there is no real organized opposition to syringe exchange, we won the debate long ago, and besides being the right thing to do, the political risk is vastly overstated. For Congress to believe us, they need to hear from more of their constituents.

First, if your Representative has not cosponsored HR 179, send them a letter asking them to today. Go to salsa.democracyinaction.org for more info. To see list of cosponsors, go to http://www.harmreduction.org/article.php?id=904

Second, call Rep. David Obey (WI) 202-225-3365, Chair of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, and ask him to take leadership to remove the ban in the 2010 Appropriations.

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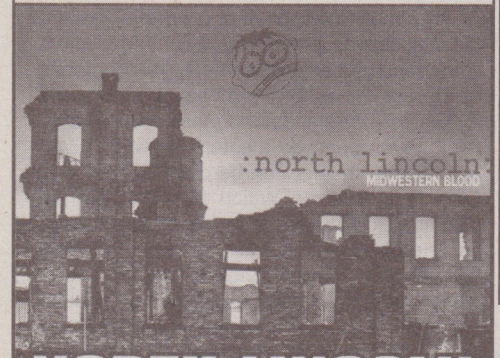

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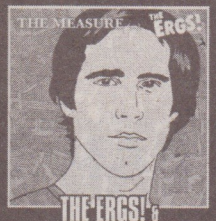

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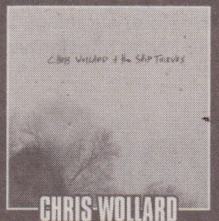

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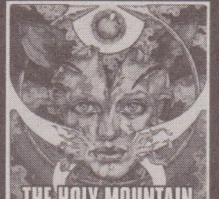

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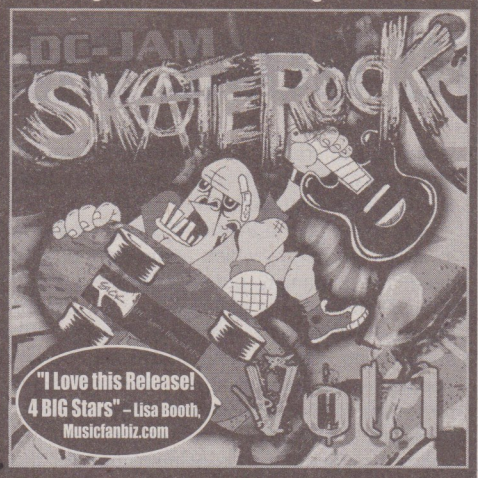

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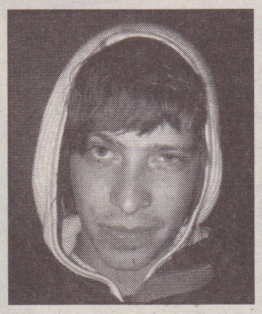
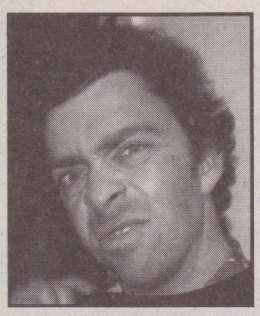
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: What's the most absurd punishment you've ever received? (asked at an SF house show with Dirtyard, Robocop 3, Seasick, and Rank Xerox)



Chris, 24, San Francisco
My friend got arrested for stealing makeup and I had nothing to do with it, but the cops were mean-mugging me and I was mean-mugging them back. They came up to me and said "you're on drugs" and I said "no I'm not," and they were being kinda predatory about it, and then arrested me for no reason.

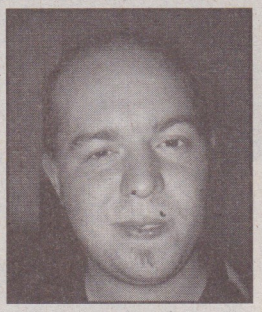
Brianne, 25, San Francisco
I went to a religious high school, and one day it was really hot in the classroom, and the only thing that was heavy enough to hold open the door was a bible, so I wedged it under the door and the teacher flipped her shit and sent me to the principal's office, I got ten hours of detention that I never bothered to serve.



Gaylen, 31, San Francisco
I got caught with weed in my room, and my parents made me eat fish guts.

Emily, 22, San Francisco
After getting in some trouble in high school, I was told that I needed to take a Life Choices class. We'd sit in this room, and this woman would give us these work-sheets that had a broken egg with a bubble inside, and she'd say "draw your life, in ten years, inside the egg. Remember, the egg is delicate and you have to handle it with care."

Ski, 30, Minneapolis
Spent the night in jail for public urination, didn't even get caught in the act.



Cameron, 24, San Francisco
I told a cop that they shouldn't be fucking with kids on New Year's Eve, and they turned around and starting hitting me with a nightstick in the back of the leg when I already had a cast on. They said "we shouldn't have hit a kid in a cast, do you want an ambulance?" and I told them I couldn't afford it, so they told me "either you get an ambulance or go to jail," so I chose the ambulance.

Zoe, 24, San Francisco
When I lived in the dorms at San Francisco State, some friends of mine and I were burning a flag as part of an art project, and I got in trouble for it and was called before a council of my peers. After refusing to name the others that were involved with the flag burning, they told me I had to make a fire safety poster and sent me a letter telling me I was considered a threat to the dorm community because I was unwilling to be forthcoming with information when asked.

James, 26, Minneapolis
I had a school police liason officer in high school that didn't like me very much. He gave me a $90 smoking ticket when I wasn't smoking, and when I protested it, I got suspended from school for three weeks.

Anandi, 34, San Francisco
I once had to take "Theft Talk," which was a version of traffic school for shoplifters.

Danielle, 23, San Francisco
I never get caught.

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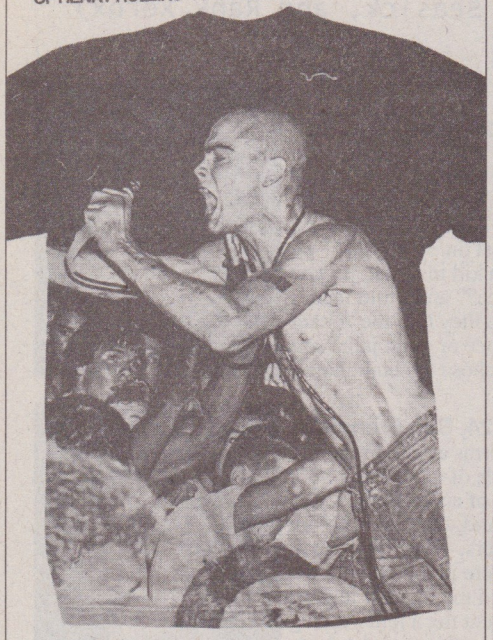

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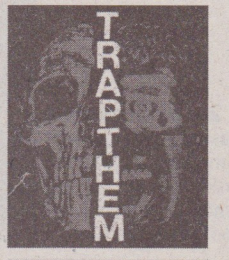

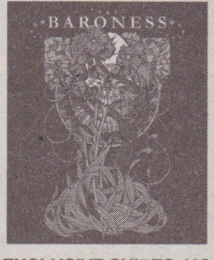

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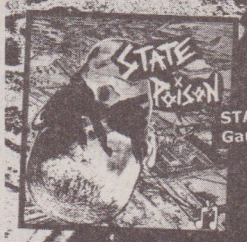

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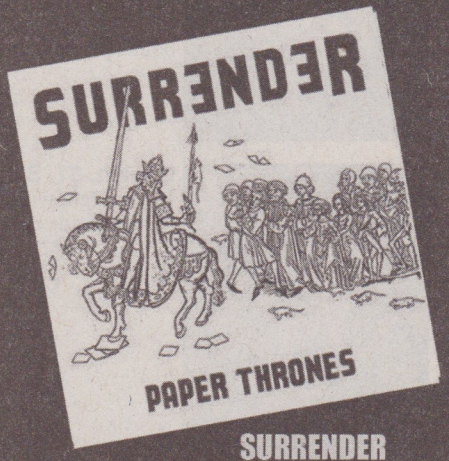

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TORONTO'S BURNING

URBAN BLIGHT

P: Frank Chartrand

It's been a while since there was a scene report on Hogtown. I host a radio show here in Toronto called Equalizing-X-Distort and there are loads of local bands coming through playing on-air. As a result I am privy to all sorts of updates on the local scene that I would like to share. There were also a lot of people who helped fill in the blanks, so this is more than a one-person effort.

Probably the most important thing that has happened in Toronto in the last couple of years was the opening of a punk store called Hits and Misses. Now those familiar with Singles Going Steady, or at least the lore of that Seattle institution can get an idea of the kind of store we are talking about: loads of new stock, ample vintage stock, crates of used vinyl, and a patch wall—a whole store that is dedicated to punk. Sure we had stores with punk sections, like Rotate This and Soundscapes, and in the past we had some strictly punk stores like Full Blast, Who's Emma?, and Sketchy's, but these stores didn't carry the magnitude nor wealth of stock that Hits and Misses has. Peter Genest, the store owner, packed up from his Seattle digs a couple years back and set up shop in Toronto. This wasn't some rash decision, as Pete had always wanted to move back to Toronto. Pete's older brother was the bassist in the YOUNG LIONS who were one of the cornerstones of the Toronto hardcore scene. Anyway, the place is a punk rock Mecca and is located on the west side of town at Bloor and Ossington; 860 Bloor Street West. The store has hours every day, usually opening around noon. If you are in town you should make the pilgrimage.

Alright, let's get into the band news… CAREER SUICIDE just released an EP titled *Cherry Beach*. This was released on Sewercide as a temporary press. CS want to go back into the studio to re-record *Cherry Beach* and hope to do a full length's worth of recordings while they are at it. They also hope to tour Europe and the West Coast. To get in touch with the band you can contact them through the singer at: marfar@gmail.com. They also have a website which is: www.careersuicide.net. Jonah, the guitarist of CAREER SUICIDE started up a one man band called MAD MEN. Jonah played all the instruments and did the recording, which makes this truly a DIY feat. He has three demos to date and these were recently collected onto one. MAD MEN are rumored to sound like MENTAL ABUSE. You can contact Jonah at: jonah.falco@gmail.com for copies.

URBAN BLIGHT has been more active in the last six months than anytime during their existence. They have a self-titled LP coming out on Slasher Records, rejected titles include: *Blight Supremacy*, *Guilty of Being Blight*, and *Hockey Blight* in Canada. Write Matt Bickle at www.slasherrecords.com for details. The singer Beav has started a new band called BAD CHOICE, which takes a cue from Criminal Damage in taking influences from the early UK scene with bands like Blitz and The Oppressed, and some USHC like Kraut and The Effigies. They hope to record in the next couple of months. You can contact Beav at: case_in_point@hotmail.com.

DANGERLOVES broke up last spring. Their latest EP *Young Pretender* was released by Static Shock, a record label run by Ellis, the bass player of the Shitty Limits in the UK. You can reach Static Shock at: staticshockrecords@googlemail.com. DANGERLOVES also covers X and contributed two unreleased tracks for an upcoming Schizophrenic comp. THE BAYONETTES broke up after their 2007 west coast tour, with their last

show being at 924 Gilman. They recorded a final single *Guilty Pleasure* for Deranged that did not get past the test press stage.

LEGION666 has been around for just over ten years now. They are planning on releasing something to commemorate their decade of existence such as a special, one-off release. Last year they released the *Black Goat Armageddon* LP to rave reviews and it is still available through Schizophrenic Records. They have a Germs cover on the *No T.O.* comp. Contact the band through christraper@hotmail.com. Official band websites at www.legion666.cjb.net and www.myspace.com/legiondclxvi. Blas, the guitarist from LEGION666, has started drumming for a metal band that formed out of MEGIDDO called SEPULCHRE. They are AMEBIX, HELLHAMMER and SODOM inspired, kind of like the '80s proto-thrash bands. They will be playing their first gig with the new RAMMER band called SLAUGHTERSTRIKE. SEPULCHRE's website is at: www.myspace.com/sepulchre666 and can be contacted at: official.sepulchre@gmail.com.

This brings me to RAMMER. They broke up after Al Biddle joined TOXIC HOLOCAUST. Joel and Dave teamed up with Andy, Eric and Ben from the ENDLESS BLOCKADE to form SLAUGHTERSTRIKE.

ENDLESS BLOCKADE is still hard at work. Toronto's favorite ultra-core band has loads of new releases and lots of plans. Most recently 20 Buck Spin released the *Primitive* full length on LP and CD. A split 7" with Shank is in the works and is to be released in limited press of 300 copies. Fuck Yoga has released a 7" of their demo and a split LP with Iron Lung, but they are both sold out. Not to be content with that list, the band has a bunch of releases in the works like the split that Relapse is doing with Agoraphobic Nosebleed. 20 Buck Spin is also doing a split LP with Bastard Noise, which should be out in the summer. Chrome Peeler is doing a split LP with Unearthly Trance but this is just at the writing stage. There is also talk about a split with Wadge on Regurgitated Semen Records out of Germany. The band hopes to tour later this year with Hatred Surge. Also, the band has an alter-ego noise project called DEATH AGONIES with some self released material; some of the members have some splinter noise projects. For details write: theendlessblockade@gmail.com.

CURSED are over no thanks to a thief in Europe that stole most of their gear and stuff. It became the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back. Chris has started a little fun project called MATURE SITUATIONS with Dan Innes who used to be in the EXCRETIONS. BURNING LOVE was a short-lived band with Chris and two-thirds of OUR FATHER. They did a recording and played a few shows and have a 7" coming out soon on High Anxiety Records.

OUR FATHER has a few recordings that you should check out. They sound like Kyuss having sex with Black Sabbath and giving birth to a crust-punk child. The band released a six-song CD titled, *First Giant*, in 2006, a two-song demo with the songs "Snow Thunder" and "Dirty Streets" in 2007, and recently a two-song EP on Valhalla Records. You can contact the label c/o Brody Parker at: 72 Allensgate Drive, Brantford, ON, N3V 1E2 or go to www.myspace.com/valhallarecordings. You can check out the band at: www.myspace.com/ourfatherband.

An OUR FATHER-related band is VATICAN CHAINSAW MASSACRE. This band has Kevin who used to sing in DIE HARD LOSERS. They just had a full length released on Goodfellow Records and is very SWARM inspired. Goodfellow Records is at 22 Wilson Street, Hamilton, ON, L8R 1C5, Canada, www.goodfellowrecords.com. The band is hoping to go on tour in the States this summer so to book shows contact Dave at: daveoconnor@hotmail.com and for general inquiries contact vaticanchainsawmassacre@hotmail.com.

EATING GLASS has a demo out and an EP titled, *Feed Them to the Vultures*, on High Anxiety Records. The band also sounds like the SWARM. EATING GLASS can be contacted through e-mail at: xlopezx@gmail.com. They have a MySpace site at www.myspace.com/eatingglasshc.

Easton and Andrus from OUR FATHER and BURNING LOVE started a new garage punk band called RACKSHOT. They just started and already have two recordings. One is a two-song demo and the other is a three-song recording that includes a Dead Boys cover. This second recording is going to be pressed as a 7" to be called *Gentleman's Club*. The band will release the EP and you can write Andrus at: 452 Concord Avenue, Toronto, ON, M6H 2P8, rackshotband@gmail.com. The band will be heading out to the east coast this summer.

BRUTAL KNIGHTS continues to crank out the jams. Matt from the ENDLESS BLOCKADE has joined up on bass and John Power is now on drums. *My Life My Fault* was their latest release on Spin the Bottle Records. Jimmy Vapid has recorded eight songs for a 12" to be titled *Total Rebellion* on PTrash in Germany and Deranged is working on a CD that collects a number of EPs. The band will be touring in Europe in April or May and you can contact the band through Jon at: jsharron@yahoo.com or www.myspace.com/brutalknights.

END PROGRAM is an anarchist crust band behind the High Art collective. The band has a demo and a recent CD titled *The Machines Are Only Human*, both of which are self-released. The band is heading out onto the road this summer and is then heading west to tour with THE MOTHERFUCKERS, THE REBEL SPELL, and CAMBRIDGE. They are also hoping to put out an EP this year. Check them out at: www.myspace.com/theendprogram.

THE TERMINALS has been around for a couple of years. The band features Joolz and Roddy from SPOTTY BOTTY and Twitchy, formerly of SHITLOADSOFFUCKALL. The band has self-released a CD that features a Johnny Cash cover, among a slew of originals. And the band also has a track on the DIY Toronto comp. You can check them out at: www.myspace.com/theterminalsrock.

G-MEN has been playing lots of shows with bands like the Dayglow Abortions and the UK Subs. Rick from ARMED AND HAMMERED has joined the band temporarily. They have a new CD about to come out so contact Mopa Dean at: Kill Rock and Roll, 2 Spadina Road, Apt. 12, Toronto, ON, M5R 2S7, Canada, mopadean@hotmail.com.

THE TIJUANA BIBLES broke up but Stacey Case is drumming for a new band called THE WEIRDIES. They have a self-released CD out titled *The Weirdies in 3-D* and you can write them at: www.theweirdies.com. Craig Daniels has a new band called BON.

I SPOKE broke up a while ago. Chris started a new band called TITAN. They released a four-song CD called *The Chrysanthemum Pledge*, which was released on vinyl in Europe a little later. Two splits have come out, one with In First Person, and the other with June Paik. TITAN just recorded five songs to be called *Colossus*, format to be determined. They hope to go on tour to promote this release and you can contact the band at: titan@sohc.org. TO THE LIONS broke up, but did get a CD released on Goodfellow Records called *Baptism of Fire*, which you can order at: www.goodfellowrecords.com. To get in touch with the band write Ian at: xsparkx@tothelions.ca. Sparkie is working on a DIY podcast for post-mortems of the Toronto FC matches. I don't know the site because it is new.

Pat Laso of the BLUNDERMEN has a new band called OVERPOWER. They are a streetpunk band rooted in early US hardcore and have been known to cover Negative Approach live. They have a song called "Hogtown Skinheads," which is about some hometown pride. HOSTAGE LIFE has a new EP out called, *White Jesus*. The record is out on Black Pints Records and is a four-song EP. You can write to check out more details on Black Pint at: 503-75 Broadway Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4P 1V1, Canada, www.myspace.com/blackpintrecords. They have a split with Calgary's Knucklehead out on Longshot Music. The press has colored vinyl and all that fancy shit, but more importantly contains two new songs, one of which is not a Reagan Youth cover. The band is working on their next split, which will be with some other MARILYN'S VITAMINS alumni. The new band is the LITTLE MILLIONAIRES, and features some of the BOMBS OVER PROVIDENCE folks. The EP is tentatively titled *Drinking in the Van Against Racism*.

BLACKJACKET self-released their third CD last year titled, *Citizens Epidemic*. They have been recording for their next one and also have a song coming out on a comp called "Turbo Zombie Uppercuts." They are heading over to Europe as you read and you can contact them at: blackjacket@yahoo.ca about their new material.

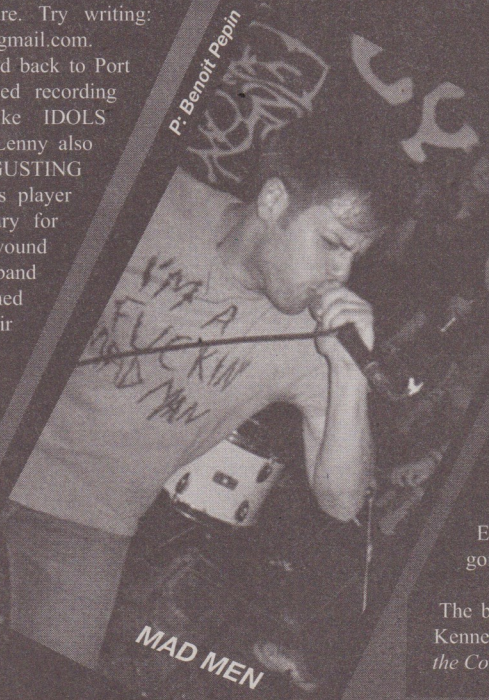
The scene has turned over a new leaf with a new generation of bands. BAD SKIN is one of those bands. They are kids who moved to the big smoke from Gananoque. They live in the west end and have shows out of their house, which is affectionately referred to as the Bad Cave. BAD SKIN have just released a new six-song demo titled, *We're Dogs*, that you can get by writing them at: 393 Margueretta Street, Toronto, ON, M6H 3S6 or by e-mail at: badskin3@yahoo.com. They also have a new recording with thirteen to fifteen songs that might make up a 7" and might be self-released. They will also try and tour in the spring or summer but write them for details.

URINARY TRACT INFECTION was one of the first bands to play the Bad Cave. Influenced by FUCKED UP and CUT THE SHIT, the band also has a demo out. Their's is an eight-song demo and it is one of my favorites from last year. They have some tracks coming out on the new *Toronto City Omnibus* comp and hope to tour and record this year for a split with the defunct GUNNAR HANSEN. To get a copy of the demo you can reach the band at: urinary.tract.infection@hotmail.com or www.myspace.com/urinarytract.

SCHOOL JERKS is a new band featuring two members of the now-defunct TERMINAL STATE. They have been around for only a few months but already they have this awesome five-song demo that combines that early-'80s punk sound with some wreckless abandon. You can write the band for a copy at: 68 Crawford Street, Toronto, ON, M6J 2V2 or at: schooljerks@gmail.com. The demos are $3.00 ppd. They have a second recording which produced a three-song EP, which should be out on Riff Raff Records and you can write to: tonyfingers13@hotmail.com for details.

The REPROBATES has broken up. This was the band that the Lovblom brothers helped form, with Gabby, John, and Lenny in the band. They had a couple of recordings together, one of which was a five-song cassette demo. That was pretty awesome. The other recording was parceled out to some comps and an EP on No Way Records called *Stress*. The FUCKED UP pisstake called "Year of the Magical Pig over Berlin" came out on a comp titled *Sick of Fun* released by Stress Domain Records. A C.O.C. cover is going on a tape comp out of Austin put out by COAXT Records. And three songs are going on the new *Toronto City Omnibus* comp, one of which is an Upright Citizens cover. And then Lenny, the drummer, split for Vancouver and then came back and their status is a little unsure. Try writing: reprobatescum@gmail.com.

Lenny moved back to Port Dover and started recording some bands like IDOLS DESTROYED. Lenny also played in DISGUSTING BODY. The bass player moved to Calgary for work, which wound up breaking the band up. This happened just after their tour with Vapid in the summer. But the band did release a four-song demo which is still available through the singer, Gena Meldazy at: 200 Palmerston Avenue, Toronto, ON, M6J 2J4. Send a couple of bucks for postage. The band has a Myspace site at: www.myspace.com/disgustingbody. Gena is doing a new band that she describes as a cross between NYHC and No Hope For The Kids. Gena is also doing an online zine called *Sound Pollution*, not to be confused with the label from Kentucky. The link is: www.soundpollutionmag.com.



MOLESTED YOUTH is one of the youngest bands in the city. Warren got into hardcore because his hairdresser told him to check out CAREER SUICIDE. What resulted is a bunch of kids learning their instruments busting out SSD and Negative Approach covers. Their first singer dropped out at the ripe age of 17 so Warren's brother has taken over vocal duties. They have a four-song demo and a live on CIUT tape with their first singer and are working on material for the current lineup. You can reach the band at: molestedyouthhc@gmail.com or www.myspace.com/molestedyouthhc.

BORED STIFF is another new band that reminds me in sound of early SSD meets Rise Above and has some anti-cop songs to boot. The band takes influences from Trash Talk, Ceremony, Look Back And Laugh, and DRI. They recorded a five-song demo that is no longer available, but they have a new ten-song live recording from our radio show. They are going into the studio to record a pair of EPs at the studio that HAZARDOUS WASTE and U.T.I. recorded their 7"s. BORED STIFF also has shirts and you can write them at: 221 Monarch Park Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4J 4S2 or by email at: boredstiffhc@hotmail.com.

HAZARDOUS WASTE is an awesome new early hardcore renaissance band from Mississauga. When I say early hardcore renaissance I mean they sound like something from the early Mystic comps. They just released a four-song EP called *Pay* on Nerve Hold Records at: 401 Dundas, Apt. 5, Woodstock, ON, N4S 1B8, Canada, email: dandegroot@gmail.com or www.myspace.com/nerveholdrecords. I heard that Schizophrenic might be doing their next EP and they have some songs on the Omnibus comp. To order the *Pay* EP, write the label or the band at: hazardous.waste@hotmail.com. Their drummer is going out west for work so the band will be on hiatus in the summer.

One of our sound engineers plays in a ska-punk band called THE CORPORATION. The best way I can describe them is like a mash-up between Op Ivy and the Dead Kennedys. They have a number of self-released CDs, the most recent being the *Return of the Corporation*. You can contact the band at: 4040 Golden Orchard Drive, Mississauga,

SICK NEEDS

ON, L4W 3A8, Canada.

TEENANGER is another new band that play a dirty mixture garage rock, blues, and country. They have recorded two tapes, each with seven tracks called *Banned from the Beaver*. The band is working on a split with Charlie And The Moonhearts for the spring. You can find out more about the band at: www.myspace.com/ teenangerrr.

WORLD WAR I is a new three-piece of kids from the East Coast, to a large extent. Lachie was in DIE BRUCKE and Steve Musgrave was in NOT ENOUGH BULLETS and many other bands. WW1 has a recording up on their Myspace, which is like a demo but I'm not sure if they are circulating actual copies. You can check out the band at: www.myspace.com/ worldwar1music.

FORTUNE TELLER sounds like Buried Alive and has the drummer from URBAN BLIGHT and the singer from RISKY BUSINESS. A lot of these newer bands can be found out about on Stuck in the City's website at: www.stuckinthecity.ca.

Newmarket is a new city north of Toronto and they have had a pretty good scene dating back to the days of SUDDEN IMPACT. As of recent, the Newmarket scene has been marginalized by the high cost of venue rentals. Any all-ages venues in town generally hold about 300 people and as such need a large audience to cover costs since there's no booze being sold. The all-ages scene peaked around 2006 and since many of the kids have come of age and have taken over Tomboos, a small downtown bar. Josh who runs Underscore Productions is the only one booking things in town at this point. In order to avoid a large overhead, all-ages shows have been moved to Sharron Hall about five minutes out of town. These don't happen very often (once every two-three months) and hold just over 100.

One of the bands that I know about are the SICK NEEDS, who features Ronald Pagan of the METAL EDDIES, Kovacs from the THROWAWAYS, and Dean from EXCRETION. They have three five-song CD/EPs that they will self-release in the summer and will be followed up with a split with the METAL EDDIES, and then splits with other bands in late fall. Hopefully a summer tour will materialize. The SICK NEEDS are playing Tomboos once every six weeks and the random all-ages gig. You can contact Ronald at: metaleddies@hotmail.com. I don't think the METAL EDDIES are still together but they do have a 20-song CD available, called *Brains of the Operation*. And there must be some unreleased material because Ronald is working on a split with the SICK NEEDS for the summer. It will come out on Ronald's label No Vinyl Records, so it will probably be a CD. Write No Vinyl at: 373 Dixon Blvd., Newmarket, ON, L3Y 5C5, Canada.

A two piece rockabilly team called BUZZDELUXE just got back from touring the States and Australia. They have a new EP titled, *Us Against You*, and a CD titled, *Buzz Deluxe*. You can reach them at: mail@buzzdeluxe.com.

BS101 recently released a 99-song self-titled CD. STACK AND LARGE has a four-song EP out, on AV Tapes and can be contacted by email at: stackandlarge@hotmail.com.

The BREW CREW is working on a release for the spring and can be contacted by email at: brewcrewmusic@hotmail.com. And the band that the BREW CREW formed out of was OVERDOSE. OVERDOSE has reunited and you can contact them at: overdosestreetpunk@hotmail.com.

The FLATLINERS had a CD come out on Fat Wreck Chords called, *The Great Awake* and can be contacted at: ugly_but@hotmail.com.

THREE POINT STANCE just had a reunion tour and collected their previous EPs onto one CD. When in Ottawa they also got interviewed by the *Ottawa Sun* because the singer is from there. Contact them through Johnny Sixblocks at: threepointstance@gmail.com. Johnny is in another band called STAY YOUNG and their email address is: stayyounghc@hotmail.com.

Christian Cannibal will be organizing the Punktoberfest event in October again, which is a big annual all-ages show that showcases the scene's bands.

A little further north is a band in Barrie called GENERATION HEXED. The band changed their name from BROWN BELT and features Ditch Dog from SONS OF ISHMAEL, and Rob and Scott from PHALLOCRACY. You can contact the band through: www.myspace.com/generationhexed.

Hamilton is a city west of Toronto. It is a working class town and has always had a great scene that dates back as far as TEENAGE HEAD and SIMPLY SAUCER in the '70s. They are kind of in the reporting area of Toronto so I wanted to mention some awesome bands from this area. GUNNAR HANSEN was one of my favorites and they reminded me a lot of 9 SHOCKS TERROR. The bassist released an EP on his label Audio Fellatio before breaking up. GUNNAR HANSEN has a bunch of unreleased songs that are going to be released on a split LP with Mississauga's U.T.I. GUNNAR HANSEN has also committed to playing a couple of record release shows, which will also give the band the opportunity for a proper goodbye. A couple of the members from GUNNAR HANSEN teamed up with Jon from the BLACK EYES CLUB to form NEVER TRUST. NEVER TRUST has a demo out which makes ample use of a marching sample that sounds like the "Holidays in the Sun." The guitarist Grant fucked up his hand and the band was on hiatus until he got better. He hasn't, so they have stopped, and the demos are gone. Another good band bites the dust.

RAH is an awesome new band from the Hammer, although half of them live in Toronto now. They have a more straightedge sound and remind me a lot of ABOUT TO SNAP. They've recorded a demo and an EP titled *Intelligent Design*, which they self-released on a label they call Chez Ogilvie. The record has just had a second press and final pressing. The band is going into the studio in the spring to record their next EP and a split EP with a yet-to-be-disclosed Toronto band. To track down the EP or updates on the band write Ian at: wearerah@gmail.com.

Sadly, Jimmy's store, Reigning Sound closed down. The VAPIDS released a full length CD titled *The Point Remains the Same* back when the store was open—absolute scorcher. An EP by the same name is about to be released in Italy on Surfin' Ki who will also be releasing *Charm School Drop Outs* on vinyl. You can write Surfin' Ki at: surfinkirecords@hotmail.it. The VAPIDS also have a song coming out on a tribute comp for the Groovy Ghoulies. Jimmy has a new band with his brother Scotty called the HARBOUR RATS. They recruited Ellis from the ROCKET REDUCERS to fill out the line up and sound like The Kids, Lazy Cowgirls, and The Devil Dogs. They have a four-song CD and a 12-song CD that you can write for at: 85 Garfield Avenue South, Hamilton, ON, L8M 2S3, Canada, or www.myspace.com/harbourrats. Jimmy has also been getting into the studio with bands. One of those is a new band from Welland called the ROCKET REDUCERS. He worked on a four-song CD called *Future's Lookin' Bright*. Some of these songs are up on their Myspace site at: www.myspace.com/rocketreducers. They also have a CD-R titled *You Call Me Stupid, I Call it Fun*, but the band isn't making anymore because they just put out a 12", which is available through the band. They call their label Kick Yer Butt and you can get a copy for $10 plus postage made out to TJ Charlton at: 720 Metler Road, Fenwick, ON, L0S 1C0, email: rocketreducers@gmail.com. They also have a 7" recorded which they hope to get a label to help release.

The LORRAINAS has been working on a new recording. www.myspace.

com/thelorrainas has some new songs. One such project involves a LORRAINAS / VAPIDS doing Smiths songs with a Ramones flavour. You can check out some of this at: www.myspace.com/leastlikelytoatributetomorrissey. A bunch of the guys from the VAPIDS play in a Misfits-tribute band called HORROR BIZ. Scotty left and was replaced by Curtis from HAYMAKER. They have a Myspace site at: www.myspace.com/horrorbiz. Glenn of SAM LAWRENCE 5 started a new band called STEELTOWN SPOILERS—scotty from the VAPIDS and Crash from SLANDER / COLUMBIAN NECKTIE fame round out the line up. Glenn is the guy behind the Joe Strummer tributes in Hamilton. Check out: www.myspace.com/steeltownspoilers.

SPOILED ROTTEN is an awesome melodic punk band from Hamilton that has been around since the mid '90s. They have a couple of self-released CDs and they come from the Ramones, Queers, Screeching Weasel school of punk. The band is hitting the studios for the first time in a couple of years to record new songs for a CD, tentatively titled, *Fat Guys Are Hard to Kidnap*. The band has a couple of self-released CDs out already and you can reach them at: 153 Balsam Avenue South, Hamilton, ON, L8M 3B6, Canada, email: amprec2@cogeco.ca or www.mypsace.com/spoiledrotten1.

RACKULA is a new all-women punk group in Hamilton featuring Patty Rotten from PANTYCHRIST and Alyssa of BDSM BAKESALE. RACKULA are releasing a live disc recorded at a TEENAGE HEAD tribute from Hamilton Place. Check out: www.myspace.com/rackulamusic. Danyell of PANTYCHRIST has started a new group with some guys from the RED LIGHT RIPPERS, called CHOP SUICIDE. They have a four-song demo titled, *Extra Saucy Rock 'n' Roll*, some of which you can hear at: www.myspace.com/chopsuicideonline.

The ORPHANS has been around since the late '80s and play Nomads / New Christs-style of punk. They have a Myspace site at: www.myspace.com/ theorphanshammerstyle.

The RESPONSIBLES is a band that features Jeff from RIOT STAR and some older guys from RAYBURNS, MEAN RED SPIDERS, and CRAZED. They have two CDs out and borrow influences from the Clash, the Sex Pistols and the Specials. They have a website at: www.theresponsibles.ca. Another ex-RIOT STAR project is the PUNK RODS. Brian from RIOT STAR teams up with Candy of the LORRAINAS and the original SPOILED ROTTEN are playing out and do a mix of covers and originals. Their myspace site is: www.myspace.com/thepunkrodshamilton. POISONED AEROS has a myspace site at: www.myspace.com/poisonedaeros. A new band called DAWN AND THE DIRTS is worth checking out as well at: www.myspace.com/dawnandthedirts.

Class of '77:

Over the last few years this awesome band called THE SCREWED formed with the idea of playing music that was just from '77. The band featured members from the original scene and is made up of Cleave Anderson from the BATTERED WIVES, Steve Koch of the DEMICS and VILETONES, Jon Borra of A NEON ROME, and Steve Saint from the SINISTERS. They self-released a covers CD titled *1977*, which has covers of songs that came out in '77. They have been behind a lot of the reunion shows that have happened in the last few years with nights that they would jam with guys from the early scene. One such collaboration involves a recording of a session with Cheetah Chrome from the Dead Boys.

TEENAGE HEAD released a similar session that they recorded with Marky Ramone, and it came out on Sonic Unyon. Frankie Venom passed away last fall due to complications with throat cancer, which was awful and floored a lot of people. There was an awesome tribute on Youtube that was filmed at the wake. But the surviving members have teamed up with Tom Wilson to form a new band called SONS OF THE HAMMER.

SIMPLY SAUCER released a CD last year called *Half Human, Half Live*. Sonic Unyon did this release also, which they recorded at Catherine North Studios which was a converted church. A prestigious NYC label called Anthology Recordings is releasing an official bootleg called *Saucerland: Rare Archival Magnetic Field Recordings*, which will feature songs from '74–'79 with the exception of *The Story of Simply Saucer*, which is from '83. The same label has just released a lost Edgar Breau solo album from '83, called, *The Shadows of Ecstasy*, and a documentary film by Greg Bennett, entitled *Low Profile: The Simply Saucer Story*, is slated for release this year. You can find a trailer for the film at: www.gregorybennett.com/documentary/saucer.html.

Greg Dick of the DREAM DATES has been doing a series of interviews with these early-wave bands on our radio show. They have been incredibly informative. Anyway, he was able to assemble the surviving members of the UGLY. Afterwards the band was inspired and started practicing with Greg on vocals and now they have started to play a few shows. Greg tells me that they are learning some material that was unrecorded so that is exciting news. And an UGLY website has been built with all kinds of updates so check out: www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/underground/6514/ugly.

The VILETONES are no longer, but Steve continues with a band called STEVE LECKIE AND THE SOLUTIONS, which features Gary Topp's daughter on keyboards. Contact Leckie because he is supposed to be doing something with some of the guys from the Stooges.

DIODES has a bunch of releases in the works. *Action Re-action* is being reissued on CD for the first time. There is another release featuring the *Tired of Waking Up Tired* digital EP, which includes rare '77 demos and alternative mixes plus some live material from that period. There will be a CD of a live show at the El Mocambo that will be coming out. These will be coming out on Ralph Alfonso's label, which is Bongo Beat Records: 2049 Melrose Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, H4A 2R6, Canada, www.bongobeat.com. The band will be playing some shows on the West Coast of Canada in the summer and another NXNE appearance may

U.T.I.

BRUTAL KNIGHTS

P: David Waldman

happen. Ian and John of the DIODES have formed a new band in between called the BEVERLEY BROTHERS. I think that is a reference to the old drinking hole, the "Bev."

EXISTERS has gotten back together as part of this and recorded eight songs of original EXISTERS material. A working title for the recording is, *Depreciation*. To find out more about this contact the band directly through Barrie Farrell at: barrieexister@rogers.com.

Zoe of the BAYONETTES filled in for the reformed TYRANNA when they got back together in the fall for their record release party. TYRANNA was a second-wave Toronto punk band formed back in 1978. They did a recording back in the day and the material was re-mastered so they could release some of it. Five of the songs came out as an EP. A local record/book store, known as Frantic City, formerly known as Babel Books, released the EP on a label that they started up called Boppa Do Down. The record is pretty amazing for early melodic punk and you can write Tim Hannah at: 123 Ossington Avenue, Toronto, ON, M6J 2Z2. Act fast on this one. Rave Up Records out of Italy has been in touch with the band about a full length, so hopefully that will come together.

Cynthia from the B-GIRLS has a new band with some guys from New York called NEW YORK JUNK. It is rumored to be Johnny Thunders-esque. ZRO4 have reformed with some of the SCREWED line up and have been playing out as of late. You can check out news about ZRO4 at www.myspace.com/zro4. JOHNNY AND THE G-RAYS re-issued their *Every Twist Reminds*, which was recorded back in 1980. This was originally produced and mixed by Stacey Heydon, who worked with TEENAGE HEAD, Iggy Pop, and David Bowie. You can get a copy through: harripalm@hotmail.com for $15 plus postage. A filmmaker by the name of Randy Marsh is working on bringing to life some black-and-white footage of the band from a gig at the Palais Royale recorded back in 1979.

THE MODS re-recorded three songs back in April. They did "Bust Down," "New Breed," and "From A Window," and hope to release these with some old demo material and some live eight-track recordings from back in '78-'80. There is a video for "Reign of Terror" up on Youtube from their reunion show in 2007, and the band made some shirts for the show that they still may have copies of. They also had some copies of the rare *22 Months* CD, but you will have to reach them.

The WAYOUTS has also gotten back together and played a few shows in support of a VON DRATS record release. There is talk of doing a live taping for a webcast. You can contact Mike about those details at: mike@traceee.com. There is a WAYOUTS site at: www.traceee.com. Click on Tracee's nose to get there. Also, Johnny Bubblegum let me know that the band has a couple of copies of their original EPs recorded way back in '78. Contact him at: willthecircle@gmail.com. This current line up of the WAYOUTS may perform in the future as GMC, doing some later WAYOUTS material.

The Last Pogo has just been released as a DVD. The new format has some extras with Chris Haight. Colin continues to work on the update, called *The Last Pogo Jumps Again, Cha Cha Cha*. For one of the best updates on the first generation of Toronto punk check out his website at: www.thelastpogo.net.

Labels:

As for labels…you have been hearing lots about the second edition of the *Toronto City Omnibus* comp throughout this report, Schizophrenic Records is also working on another local comp called *No T.O.*, which is a tribute to the *Yes L.A.* comp from back in the day. It will be a show only release and features covers by LEGION666, CAREER SUICIDE, and some others. It's going to be a one-sided 12" on clear vinyl like the original. Craig is also working on a series of old local reissues which, include SONS OF ISHMAEL *Hayseed Hardcore*, the YOUNG LIONS' demos as a 12", and the MICRO EDGE demo as an LP. There is the ENDLESS BLOCKADE / SHANK split which is limited to 300 copies, a DISCO ASSAULT *Saturday Night Bleeder* EP, a DEATHCAGE EP, and a BROKEN NEEDLE EP all in the works. For details, write: Craig Caron, 17 West 4th Street, Hamilton, ON, L9C 3M2, Canada, www.schizoprhenicrex.com.

Fans of Bad Productions has relocated to Toronto, the label's birthplace, after 17 years, and is working on an Ontario-area compilation, to be entitled *More Summer Squash*, to be released in 2010 when FOBP turns 20. Bands that are interested in contributing should send an unreleased song for consideration to: 297 Westmoreland Avenue, Toronto, ON, M6H 3A4, Canada. As a way to fund the next release, FOBP is offering six titles for $20 PPD. The titles available are VELVET CLAWS *Quarantine* 7", FRENETCIS / NAKATOMI PLAZA split 7", GOATBOY / DRUNK split LP, and the comps *The Street Enters The House* CD, *Go*! 2xLP, and *Killed By Canada* 2xCD.

Chris Colohon of CURSED has started a label called High Anxiety. Today the label has put out EPs by LIVING DARKNESS, CHEAP TRAGEDIES and EATING GLASS. The next projects he has coming include his two side-project bands BURNING LOVE and MATURE SITUATIONS, as well as the CURSED recorded at the BBC. You can write him at: crossfire13@yahoo.com.

The drummer from CAREER SUICIDE, Dave Brown does the label called Sewercide and has just released a new EP on the label by GENETIC ANGRY from his native Truro, Nova Scotia. Dave also did a little side-project band with Jonah Falco called DEAF MUTATIONS. They released a 3 song demo, which you can order through Dave at: 1192 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON, M6J 1J6.

Matt from Spin the Bottle moved to Toronto to be with his girlfriend and joined the SCHOOL JERKS. He runs this awesome garage-rock label called Spin the Bottle.

Valhalla Records is also putting out a BLACK SHIPS 12" titled *Omen*. The address is above under OUR FATHER.

Black Pint Records also released a couple of releases by the CREEPS from Ottawa. You can write for *Lakeside Cabin* or the new 7", titled *These Walls*. The address is up in the section about HOSTAGE LIFE.

Nerve Hold Records is also putting out a HARD CHARGER EP titled, *Bombs Will Reign*. Nerve Hold's contact information is in the section above about HAZARDOUS WASTE and they have a website at: nervehold.blogspot.com.

Along with the URBAN BLIGHT 12", Slasher Records is rumored to be working on a CHOICE 12".

Venues:

There are three groups of people doing the lion's share of show promotion in the city right now. Mark Pesci puts together both 19+ bar and DIY all-ages punk and hardcore shows. You can contact him at: markpesci@hotmail.com. Greg Benedetto and his Stuck In The City collective are dedicated to building up the all-ages hardcore scene. While

TYRANNA

TO THE LIONS

P: Don Pyle

P: Mateus Mondini

they are similarly diverse, their focus seems to be on the moshy-er side of hardcore. You can check out their blog to get a sense of what they're doing, or contact Greg at: greg.benedetto@gmail.com. Matt from High Art for the Lowdown has started up a bar called Annie's On Queen and Gena is helping out with the booking. They are an open-format punk bar and have hosted a lot of crust, grind, and metal-core shows, as well as the occasional acoustic night. Contact them at: anniesonqueen@live.ca or www.anniesonqueen.weebly.com.W

Adrift Skate Shop has been a regular fixture of the hardcore punk scene for the past five years. They recently moved locations from Kensington Market to a new store at 116 Spadina Avenue. There was a photo show of both skateboarding and concert photography that commemorated the old Adrift location. Lyndsey and the Adrift team acquired an unused warehouse that they call the Adrift Clubhouse. Mark and SITC have been using the space for some of the most amazing shows the city has seen in a long time. Highlights include a secret NO AGE show, REIGN SUPREME / TRAPPED UNDER ICE, and an insane CAREER SUICIDE show with about 400 people in attendance despite sub-zero temperatures. The lease at the Clubhouse is up in April and they are looking for a new space. In the meantime you can visit: www.adriftskateshop.com

An artist live/work loft space in the city's east end has also become a hub of activity. The building is called Siesta Nouveaux and it was home to the the High Art for the Low Down space—now being run out of Annie's on Queen—and Studio BLR which is where a lot of the smaller SITC shows find their home. A new space in the market has opened up called Rear View Mirror. It used to be a space that housed Bread and Circus. That's good to see another venue in the market now that Planet Kensington is closed. Graffiti's also does the odd in store show. FOBP's Dee jay "Ya Ma Bzzz" spins punk vinyl at Mitzi's Sister and is dabbling in booking bands too. tjpf.robinson@sympatico.ca is the email for bands that want a gig in Toronto at Mitzi's Sister at 1554 Queens Street West. As Parkdale goes, the older scene has some shows at the Cadillac Lounge and Dakota's.

In terms of 19+ bar shows, Sneaky Dee's and Rancho Relaxo continue to regularly host punk and hardcore bands. Occasionally, the Kathedral will have worthwhile shows. And a new disco bar in Parkdale, called Wrongbar, promised to start having regular punk shows, but outside of a HARD SKIN / FUCKED UP show, the space has not lived up to its potential. I also heard that Lou Molinaro is opening up a nightclub in Hamilton.

Stores:
Babel Books is a great new store down the street, just south of Dundas on Ossington. My brother's friend Tim Hannah runs the store. The store has recently changed their name to Frantic City and they are located at 123 Ossington Avenue. Rotate This has moved a little further west to 801 Queen Street West. They are one of the best places to get concert tickets and vinyl. They have a website at: www.rotate.com. Daniel Hannah of TERMINAL RAGE fame started up a video store called Eye Sore Cinema, which is above the new Rotate This location. Daniel does an excellent job of capturing underground culture on the blog: eyesorecinema.blogspot.com.

Spiderman Al has started up a vegetarian diner called Sadie's Diner, which is at 504 Adelaide Street West, and you can check out their menu at: www.myspace.com/sadiesdiner.

Print Matter:
Liz Worth has finishing her book on Southern Ontario punk rock, titled, *Treat Me Like Dirt: An Oral History of Punk in Toronto and Beyond*. Bongo Beat is working on publishing the book and there is a lot of anticipation about its release. Check: www.bongobeat.com for details. Liz has a chapbook that has just come out called *Eleven:Eleven*, which she describes as being about bad trips, occult obsessions, and surreal punk fiction about death and debauchery. You can order the chapbook for $5.00 through her site at: www.lizworth.com.

Radio:
"Aggressive Rock" is a metal and extreme music show on CKLN. It is the longest standing show of its kind in the city and an interim management team tried to kick them off the air. There was a temporary stay of execution but they are not out of the woods yet. It would be a travesty if the city lost this show. For updates contact Paul Johnson at: paulagainst@yahoo.com.

"Equalizing Distort," on CIUT 89.5FM plays punk and hardcore. Every week we play a demo on our show so if you are in a band with a recording shoot it our way. My address is: 21 Foundry Avenue, Unit 5, Toronto, ON, M6H 4K7. If you have any questions email me at: equalizingxdistort@ciut.fm.

SMART COPS

Smart Cops from Italy is a very provocative hardcore band. Their approach is rough, they play in Italian 1930s police costumes, on the first EP they pose with an S&M ball gag, one of their T-shirt designs closely resembles a swastika. There's a lot of attitude here. Let's find out what's up.

Interview by Andy Instigate.

MRR: Hey Smart Cops. Who plays what?
Baloo: I'm Baloo and I sing, but at the same time I'm the doctor "death," like one who was the left arm of Bin Laden.
Edo: I'm Brother Edo and I play with dildos. I'd like to clarify, before starting the interview, that all my answers have been censored and modified by the Italian secret service. The real answer to all of your questions would have been "your mother."
Vallicellen: Hi Andy, hi everybody. I'm Vallicellen and I play the drums.
Marco: Hey, I'm Marco a.k.a. Il Grinta. I play bass.

MRR: You are truly from Italy, as your members are spread across the northern part of the country. Is this a problem?
Marco: Yes, especially now that I'm living in New York.
Baloo: Practicing is expensive; we have to sell our asses on the road to make money for gas. But it's not a huge problem.
Vallicellen: Yes, I hate driving from Bologna to Venice through the fog! But in the end we always have a good time at practice. Usually it goes something like this: we practice for one or two hours, then we start complaining about how hungry we are, so we go back to the Grinta's headquarters and cook some greasy and high caloric food (the Italian way); then if there are parties in town we go, and try to get as drunk as we can. Otherwise we stay home usually watching (porn) movies on the couch.

MRR: So now do you practice via telephone?
Baloo: We practice via Skype. It's cheaper than practicing in Italy.

MRR: You use sex, fascism, drugs, and violence in your artwork. Are these things you wish to make a social comment on or just an easy power expression?
Baloo: Personally I think it is too easy for a punk band to fall into the common stereotype with such nasty arguments like sex, violence, and drugs. We use this shit just to make a social critique, but in a smart and funny vision about life and people's hidden behaviors.
Marco: Yes, we use violent imagery, but we try to use irony to defuse the real concept.
Edo: We are trying to represent the different ways in which Italian police assure us cleaner streets and a future for our children. They are a permanent and unlimited source of inspiration.

MRR: You have an impressive chart of old bands such as L'A.D.M., Ohuzaru, La Piovra, Berlusconi SS, and more. How did you manage to start yet another band?
Marco: It starts like an itch that you have to scratch.
Baloo: Hey man, you forgot With Love, Honey Don't, Eat Death, Revolution Summer, Endless Inertia, and Ban This. Isn't it enough? We have more skeletons trapped in the closet! Anyway, the older I get, I put more effort and commitment into new projects. They help me to stay young. I would like to sing "I'm gonna skate 'till I die" but you should see my knees man.
Edo: Basically our aim with Smart Cops is to try and mix the worst part of all our previous bands, but if you need to dig deeper, the reason we play together is that we all share one passion: shit eating.

MRR: And how goes the story of Smart Cops' birth?
Baloo: Too much drugs and alcohol. That was the beginning.
Vallicellin: Marco called me one afternoon and asked me if I wanted to play the drums in a punk band. He made sure I could play fast and had no problems with wearing a uniform. At the beginning we were also supposed to play with gun-shaped guitars. I wanted to play with the handcuffs on, but that was too difficult.

MRR: Do you like living in Italy?
Marco: Yes, that's why I live New York now.
Baloo: Fuck yeah!
Edo: Yes, except a few bad things like the food and the sea. There are many good things like too many cops, the mafia, and the rise of fascism.
Vallicellin: O Sole Mio!

MRR: Do you speak any other languages except Italian and

English? I heard some German on your EP.
Baloo: There's just a German word on the EP and it means "Get out of my way!", but sarcastic, like a nazi-cop.
Vallicellin: I scream the "eins zwei drei vier!" Shit, those are the only words I know in German. Oh wait, I forgot, I know "sheisse" and "führer."

MRR: Are you joyful pessimists?
Edo: I'm an enthusiastic law-abider.
Marco: I'm a pessimistic joyfulist.

MRR: Do you like the Exploited? What other bands do you like?
Vallicellin: I've never listened to them. As for about English punk bands, I love the Damned and the Buzzcocks. To me punk is an American thing. I love the 13th Floor Elevators, Black Sabbath, and the Stooges.
Baloo: I don't like the Exploited, they were famous for their audience made by skins (not the red ones). Thinking about it, since I play in Smart Cops I should probably like them, but I don't.
Edo: I am completely in tune with Wattie's taste for gabber music.
Marco: I love the Exploited, the first song I learned on the guitar was "Sex & Violence!"

MRR: What do you work with? Y'all have jobs that allow you to go on tour?
Edo: I'm a police officer.
Baloo: As I mentioned before, I'm a doctor and a wine taster; sometimes I can't decide on which profession. It's a problem! The only solution is to quit and go on tour.
Vallicellin: I don't have a steady job, I don't want to grow up.
Marco: I used to be a teacher but now I pose naked at an art School. New York is full of interesting jobs.

MRR: Your first EP on Sorry State rules. Now you got another one in the oven, released by Sorry State and Adult Crash. How many songs? Where did you record it? What's next to come?
Marco: The new 7" has five songs, we recorded in Venice before I moved from Italy. We also recorded a one-sided tour 7" that we will self-release. Maybe one day we'll record an LP, who knows.

MRR: Don't you think it's a strange feeling wearing a jean jacket without anything under it?
Edo: I love the cashmere touch on my skin.
Baloo: Antihistamines!

MRR: Does Italy have a huge garage scene? Is it bigger than Amebix and Strike Anywhere? Where does Smart Cops fit in?
Marco: There is not a big garage scene but it's better than Strike Anywhere. But I'm not sure that it's better than Amebix. Unfortunately Smart Cops are located in the punk scene.

MRR: Have you played your music to your parents? What do they think about it?
Vallicellin: I played the songs to my mother. She said: "Why do you have to play so fast? And what is he screaming about?! 'Poliziotto lecca la mia merda' ('cop lick my shit')?!?! Son, you're gonna get into trouble."
Baloo: My parents' idea about my projects is that we are huge and successful. I guess they picture me running around in a fucking crowded arena, like a gladiator. And that's exactly the opposite of how I would define a great show!
Marco: My mom loves my music, comes to my shows, and she takes drugs—not the hard ones. She rocks.

MRR: You're going to USA for a sweet-ass tour in June. Are you freaking out?
Marco: For me it's boring. I wish we were touring Bora-Bora Island.
Baloo: I got pissed jeans.
Marco: I'm really excited, in particular I can't wait to visit New York City and its "mean streets."

MRR: What US bands are you hoping to play with?
Baloo: Seriously, I would like to play with some old bands (even though I hate reunions), just to have the chance to see some legendary punk/hardcore bands.
Edo: Black Oak Arkansas, Chicago, Boston, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, basically all bands whose components are bald people who keep trying to grow their hair.
Marco: I want to play with bands of old friends that I met around the US.
Vallicellin: I'm looking forward to the No Way fest. I think all the punk bands I like the most will be playing there.

MRR: Would you do a tour with Wretched if they'd reunite?
Edo: No, never. I would like to tour with Negazione and Indigesti, Wretched are overrated.
Marco: I have the same opinion, I would like to play with Peggio Punx instead.

MRR: Marco told me briefly that your new EP is a concept EP about a cop who starts taking drugs to be able to live. How was the cop's life before he began doing drugs? Do you believe all cops are string puppets?
Vallicellin: His life was really boring, just beating and arresting people...he was a cop in a sea of cops just like him, then he found drugs and became a "smart cop."
Edo: The cop's life before doing drugs was the same as our life before we started doing drugs. With the slight difference that we never got smarter. Cops are all string puppet motherfuckers.
Baloo: Cop's life was alienating. His life before doin' drugs was a parody. I believe cops are string rotting puppets. Die, and mold!

MRR: Do you like American drugs?
Edo: Do drugs have a nationality? If yes, I love American drugs but prefer the Antarctic ones.
Baloo: Yes, I do. Especially because of their home delivery! That's awesome.
Marco: Here weed is better than in Italy, but I miss hashish.
Vallicellin: I hope we get the chance to try them. On our European tour we took mushrooms in Holland and that was really great. Anyway, my fantasy would be to have lived in San Francisco in the late sixties doing LSD all the time.

MRR: Any last words?
Vallicellin: Egala!
Marco: Egala!
Edo: Egala!
Baloo: Egala!

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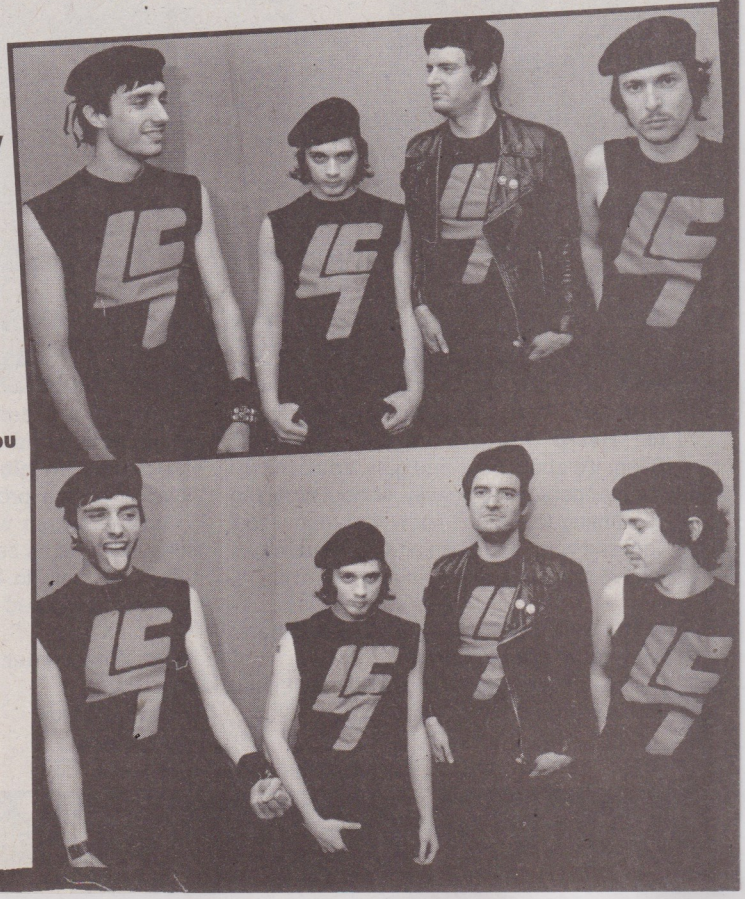

strange boys

The Strange Boys are from Austin, Texas. I met them during Fuck Yeah Fest 2006 in Echo Park, Los Angeles. At around one pm I was loading gear into the venue, and there they were playing. I immediately stopped and watched in total amazement. This was perfect rock and roll. Soul punk, American junk, whatever, it was perfect. Ever since then, we've started an amazing friendship that will last at least three or four more years, tops.
Interview by Tim Presley

MRR: So Ryan, tell me about the lyrics to "Heard You Wanna Beat Me Up."
Ryan: It's about boys and girls. You can hurt another person very easily, without meaning or wanting to. I didn't know that then. I feel very sad when I see him and I wish he would forgive me, but I don't think he ever will.

MRR: Phil, you and Ryan are brothers. Are you his body guard?
Philip: I haven't had to protect him yet, but I do have a gun.

MRR: You've had a pretty extensive recording process over the last couple years. When did you decide you were happy with the album?
Ryan: We had promised our next record to In the Red so we recorded the newest songs we had as best we could at the time, then sent them to Larry. He liked them so then we just waited for it to come out.

MRR: What's your favorite color?
Matt: Blue.
Greg: Light blue.
Ryan: Black.
Philip: NODZZZ.

MRR: Very crucial: "Louie, Louie" or "Wild Thing"?
Matt: "Louie, Louie."
Greg: "Wild Thing."
Philip: "Wild Thing."
Ryan: "Wild Thing."

MRR: Matt, you are the best drummer. While on tour last year, why did Ryan yell at you in Detroit?
Matt: I make mistakes too, and Ryan was just helping keep me in check. At that point of the tour I think I was losing focus a little and not really playing with the guys on

stage as best as I could, you know stuff like watching them and listening to them, and reading them and then playing off that. As a drummer, I think it's always important to do what's right for the music and to help push the musicians playing with you.

MRR: Greg, do you realize that you've created an incorrigible strand of illness, named "Greg's Cough," that will plague us forever more?
Greg: I'm sorry to hear that you guys have been infected, but also a little honored to have an illness in my name. I guess I've earned it. Maybe after you're done doing interviews for *Maximum Rock and Roll*, you can compose a piece on the subject in the *American Medical Journal*.
MRR: Ryan, if you could collaborate musically with anyone, who would it be? Me?
Ryan: We have collab'd, remember when I told you about my potentially revolutionary *double wah* idea in which I stand with each foot firmly planted upon its own sick Cry Baby, with the soles of my feet touching nothing but wah? You said, "That sounds sick," then told me about your idea for the *double wammy*. I think that's as close as we'll ever get.

MRR: Did you know weed is a gateway drug?
Ryan: We're counting on it.

MRR: Greg and Ryan, you're pretty good on the git-fiddle. Who's your idol, Billy Gibbons or some obscure blind dude?
Greg: On this last tour I've mostly been influenced by this series of books called *Giants of Rock*. They come with CDs to help you keep up. Ryan and Philip's mom gave them to us.
Ryan: Greg's been teaching me a lot of what he's learned from *Giants of Rock*. I've also been listening to a lot of Fred Neil.

MRR: When is the next tour?
Ryan: June with Mika Miko in America, then July we're off to Europe for the first time.

MRR: Mika Miko are an awesome band from LA. I know "scenes" are totally bogus, but which city do you guys think is "going off" musically?
Ryan: As far as cities with the most good bands, San Francisco and Atlanta.

MRR: Phil, why don't you lay off about the cover songs? You guys totally nail that James Brown cover.
Philip: I like playing covers, but if I am bored playing it, then I have to assume that the audience is really bored. If someone seeing us thinks we're boring, I would rather be playing our own songs, then boring them with a song they really love by someone else.

MRR: Early on, you guys were called The Waves. Did that dude from "Wavves" buy the name off you?
Ryan: I wish. We've known Nathan for a few years now, we met him when he had that band Fantastic Magic. I like Wavves, two pieces are hard. Did you know the drummer is named Ryan?

MRR: Would you rather have Bill Clinton jam on the sax with you, or body surf with Obama?
Philip: I would surf on Obama, give him a little taste of the waterboard.
Ryan: We don't jam with pigs.

MRR: A friend of mine once said "Nothing lasts forever, even cold November Rain." Do you agree? Do you see yourself playing forever?
Philip: I agree with your friend, the only thing that lasts forever is nothing.
Matt: Both playing and listening to music will always be a part of my life.
Ryan: Let me go outside and solo for awhile and I'll get back to you.

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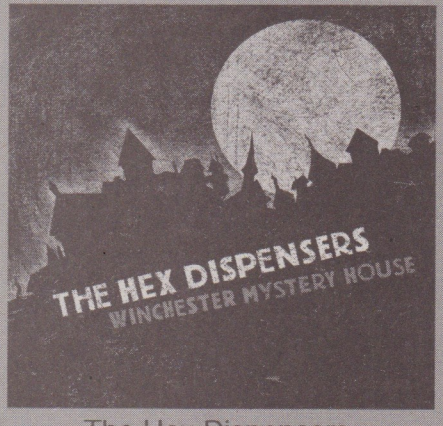

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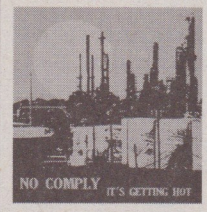

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ZYANOSE

INSANE NOISE RAID

This interview was conducted via email over the autumn of 2008. Since the band is unable to understand English, Shin from Punk and Destroy shop (as well as drummer in Framtid) helped out with the translation. Since then Zyanose's August 2008 recording came out on Crust War Records (CWR033) as their 2nd 7" entitled Lovele SS. *The "hype" for this 7" has been quite extraordinary. For the record (hu-hum), it contains four noise/hardcore punk songs with a metallic feel and a seven-minute long rather crazed exercise in noise, repetition, and madness. Dance & disorder!!!!*

MRR: What is the history of Zyanose? When did you start and how? What ideas did you have when you started band?
Zyanose: We formed in 2002. At the time I played guitar for Defector, but I wanted to start a band that sounded like Confuse, so I formed Zyanose with some lazy drunk punk bastards in bar Konton.

MRR: Can you tell me who plays in Zyanose? What other bands did or do the members play in?
Zyanose: Toyo: vocals, Sakana: bass, and in the fall of 2007 guitar player Hatanaka and bass player Shogun joined in. Our drummer left the band without saying anything, but now we have help on drums from five people. Sakana sang and I played guitar in Chaotic Goats Farm, but we are not active anymore. I played guitar for Defector and Defuse.

MRR: What other current bands do Zyanose members play in? I know Shogun plays in Spiral Collective...
Zyanose: Shogun was doing a band named Spiral Collective, but since they lost their singer they stopped playing. He also played bass for Greenmachine before. Right now all band members are only playing in Zyanose. The Separations is a secret band of Zyanose!! Did you recognize that????

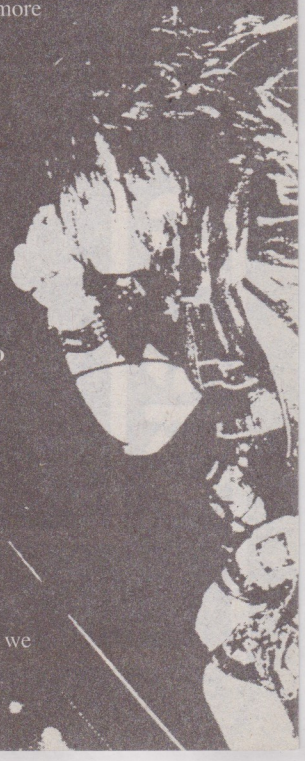
MRR: What is your discography? I know of your *Spirochaeta* demo from 2005 and the *Crossing* 7" from 2006 and of course the Zyanose/The Separations split also from 2006...are there any other releases or recordings?
Zyanose: Yes!!!!!

MRR: Zyanose is very popular in the USA and Europe, but it is very hard to get Japanese records because of very limited releases. For example one 7" single is pressed in 500 copies, and then only 50 copies are sold as export outside of Japan. Will the Zyanose single get printed again?
Zyanose: Popular???? I can't believe that...that's really surprising. In Japan no one cares about us. Hahahaha! It seems like only famous bands in Japan can sell 500 copies of their records, but most people seem interested in distributing their records to foreign countries... maybe?? The label owner of Guerilla Records, who released the first Zyanose 7", worked hard and saved money to put out that record. As far as a reissue happening, it depends on the label. If you want to reissue some releases of a Japanese label, you should contact the band and ask directly, but sometimes the label owns the copyright of the recordings and doesn't want reissues. That makes no sense to us. We wish labels, bands, and the local scene worked together more. As far as the Zyanose EP reissue goes, we are still thinking about it. Now we have a different band line up, and we don't play those songs anymore.

MRR: You can actually download all Zyanose records on the internet via unauthorized file sharing. What do you think of free pirated Zyanose music on internet?
Zyanose: Maybe Zyanose records are already hard to find, but people can share the music through tape trading, etc... About the internet, it's sometimes nice, but when people upload our music without telling us before, that's a problem. I think the worst thing about sharing is uploading the music that a band is currently trying to sell.

MRR: In the Zyanose logo there is Anarchy "A"–is Zyanose an anarchist band? What are your lyrics about?
Zyanose: We have no special reason for using the anarchy sign. There are so many things that make me frustrated, but I'm never going to do something political like demonstrating etc. Japan will never change for the better, I think. People are more nervous than before—lots of suicide, murder without reason, etc. Mass media provides us only with shit everyday. Popular music only sings about how to find a cool boyfriend/ nice girlfriend. We use the anarchy sign to recognize ourselves as different from people like that. Our lyrics are about the frustration we feel in our daily lives, and depression, and uneasiness. But let's not give in; stay positive and fight back against bullshit!!! That's it.

MRR: I know there is talk about the LP, so what is happening? How many new songs/ noise bursts do you have? Will it sound similar to the old material?
Zyanose: Yes, we got an offer to release a full album, but since then we have had some problems in the band, so it'll take more time to write an LP...We're very careful about doing this. Some people say that Zyanose has changed, but we've not changed. We're just going back to the feeling that we had when we



INSANE NOIZE RVID

CRUST IES ARE PUNK YET?

REVENGE AND SURVIVE!!!

listened to Gloom's noisecore music. We were blown away!!! Right now we're thinking about taking part in a four-way split LP on Crust War Records before the LP, but everything is still being planned. I'm ready for both records. Our next releases will be more destructive, ear-bleeding noiser!!!! I want to show the recent noisecore bands from the USA that noisecore is not only about full distortion on your guitar!!!!

MRR: Do you think you can capture the true sound of Zyanose on record? What's the difference in the sound from recording to when you play concerts?
Zyanose: We have so many ideas on how to go about recording—sometimes very well produced, sometimes poor sounding, etc. Either way, we'll try our best. At our shows we only play 15-minute sets. We don't have enough concentration or power for more. Hahahahaha! But we try to play as hard as we can in those 15 minutes, much more than others.

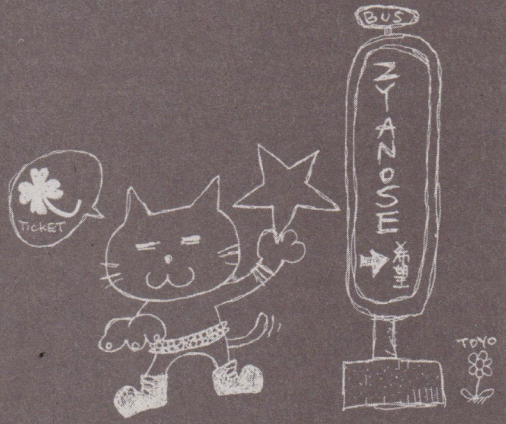
MRR: What other good Japanese punk noise bands should the public know of? D-Clone is also very popular in Europe. And so is Geranium but that band broke up, and of course Isterismo is popular too...
Zyanose: Isterismo is Excellent!!!! They're the band that I love most that's currently playing…and I really like Death Dust Extractor; they sound like Doom, and they're also great!!!

MRR: How is life in Osaka? Many good bands have come from Osaka such as S.O.B., Gloom, Framtid, and many more. Is Osaka very different from other cities in Japan? What do Zyanose members do when not making punknoise? Drink too much beer or work?

Zyanose: I love the city of Osaka a lot. I was born and grew up here. Osaka's famous for comedy, rudeness, and being the Japanese city with the highest homeless population. It is the poorest city in Japan. People here try to enjoy their lives without waiting for someone else's help, and this is also true for the punks. We all have jobs!!! Do you think we look so rude, and people are like "work sucks!!"? Me and Shogun work construction jobs, Sakana is a seller, and Hatanaka runs bar Konton. There's no place to squat here and what's the life of a squatter??? All Japanese punks live in normal Japanese society.

MRR: When will Zyanose tour Europe?
Zyanose: Go to Europe??? We're very serious about making punk music but very bad at running a band. Hahahaha! We have no money like other bands 'coz we spent it all on drinking beer…Hahaha! I have no idea how can we fly to and tour Europe?

zyanose.exblog.jp



ZYANOSE

the ballpoint pen and art of

Dennis Dread

Middle age is a chasm that consumes all too many punks. True story. Anyone in their 30s, 40s, or 50s will tell ya the same thing. So when you see kids from way back still on the street and still down with the kids, it always makes you feel less like a balding fuck up. Double so when the kids are amazing artists making amazing art. This interview took place over drunken emails from Dennis' home in Portland and Lazaro Cardenas, Michoacan in March 2009.

Interview by Mike Antipathy

MRR: So, Dennis, where are you from originally?
Dennis: I was born in New York and raised in Ossining, a beautiful suburb about 40 minutes north of Manhattan along the Hudson River.

MRR: Was there a particular gateway drug that led you into punk and hardcore? I dunno, an older friend or a certain record or coincidence or something that caught your eye and made the whole subculture resonate with you?
Dennis: I think being a frustrated kid with lots of pent up energy and anger made the whole subculture resonate with me…ha-ha. I was a pre-teen with a mullet and a Twisted Sister t-shirt when I accidentally discovered punk on the radio. It was a complete accident. I was just spinning the dial on my boom-box late one night when I landed on some college station that was broadcasting what sounded to my young ears like the ranting of a total maniac. The tri-state area had some amazing late night radio shows during the '80s and that was my "gateway." Total accident. Whoops! But I guess it makes sense in a way. The things I still love most about punk are the raw emotions and random mistakes. I had no idea what it all meant, but it felt like I had stumbled upon some secret Videodrome channel and it was…cleansing. I had discovered a fissure in the programming and I would never hear music quite the same again. I started recording the shows and, more importantly, I started drawing my own crude homemade cassette tape covers with skulls and skateboarding demons in spiked leather jackets. I didn't know it at the time, but this would strangely foreshadow how I would waste endless hours as an adult.

MRR: I think I met you in the mid 1990s in Portland that was back before the punk invasion and subsequent gentrification when Portland was kind of a West Coast Pittsburgh. What attracted you to Portland and what has made you stay for long?
Dennis: Yeah man, I think we met when I was in Eugene for Resist & Exist. Some pretty dumb shit went down at that fest, but I personally had a great time and met a few people who remain good friends to this day. You're one of 'em! I came to Portland for the same reason I assume everyone comes here: Bigfoot! I was traveling around for a while, riding freight trains all over the place and generally living the life of the dirty and useless, but I instinctively knew I wanted to plant my roots in the beautiful Northwest. The weather and landscape resonated well with my disposition. It figures Portland was recently declared the most depressed city in America!

MRR: What are you up to in Portland these days?
Dennis: I've got bills to pay so I pretty much divide my time between working with homeless kids on the streets, spending time with my family, and devoting insane hours to my art when I should probably be sleeping. By day I'm a mild-mannered social worker trying to help kids get off drugs and at night I sit in the basement like a fucking black wizard with a horde of zombies dripping from my pen! I've got lots of album covers lined up for 2009 and I've also been writing a lot more. I should have a new issue of *Destroying Angels* out by the end of the year. I've been curating underground art exhibits for the past few years and I'm very excited about the upcoming show I've organized! It's called Entartete Kunts and it celebrates the art of metal and punk without a trace of irony. This year I'm featuring work by Michel "Away" Langevin of Voivod, Arik Roper of High On Fire/Sleep infamy, Swedish death metal legend Kristian "Necrolord" Wåhlin, Rob Miller of Amebix, my local favorite Chanel Adair of Lebenden Toten, and many more! It will *rule*! I'm actually showing Nick Blinko's original drawing from the *Death Church* LP! It's the back cover drawing with the zombie head and the weird bird creature! To say I'm deeply honored is an understatement. The reception will take place on Friday, June 19th at The Life Gallery in downtown Portland and we'll be spinning vintage vinyl into the witching hour!

MRR: No shit. How in the world did you manage to wrassle up Amebix, VoiVod and Nick Blinko's art at all, much less at the same time?
Dennis: Rob Miller was supposed to be in the exhibit last year, but he got Amebix back together and had to bow out, so this year he's crafting a special handmade sword that says '"no gods no masters" on the blade! Away was hard to pin down too 'cause Voivod is still active, but I guess I was persistent. Amazingly, this is his first exhibit in the US! Away and Rob are both very nice guys, totally unpretentious in every way. Nick Blinko was the hardest artist to track down, but I was able to break through the wall of silence with the help of a mutual friend who apparently told his art dealer I was trustworthy. I still can't believe they sent the *Death Church* art! S. Clay Wilson is also in the show, which is a total fucking honor. He's one of the granddaddies of underground art and notoriously difficult to… uh…coordinate. He did the cover for The Accused LP *More Fun Than an Open Casket Funeral*. Jason Storey is in the show too, punks will remember his art from Neurosis' *Pain of Mind*, and he also did stuff for Strychnine, and Sacrilege BC back in the '80s. Other artists include members of Watain, Haemorrhage, Lugubrum, and Villains from Brooklyn. I can't think of a better excuse to get drunk in an art gallery!

MRR: So let's talk about art a bit, something I know literally fuck-all about. Was an artistic passion something you were born with?
Dennis: Yeah, I've been drawing for as long as I can remember. Probably as long as I could hold something that left marks on a surface. But I go long periods without drawing at all. I've got a wicked misanthropic streak, but still I can only stay holed up alone in a dark basement for so long.

MRR: Did you have a lot of support for your art back when you were younger?
Dennis: Nah, my family struggled a bit financially when I was a kid and I think my mom saw "art" as the road to ruin, so I never had art lessons or supplies or anything like that. But I didn't let that stop me. My older brothers and I were really into comics when we were kids and we used to have drawing contests to entertain ourselves while my mom was at work. My brothers really encouraged me to work at my drawings. We used to put on Judas Priest or Black Sabbath records and just draw for hours. I guess the way some kids heard great music and learned to play an instrument—I looked at the amazing album covers and tried to create my own.

MRR: From my real narrow view of your work over the years, it seems that it has mostly been done in pen and ink. Have you ever worked in other media? I dunno, pastel skulls or clay zombies?
Dennis: I've tried lots of different media over the years, but I really like ballpoint pens the most. Critics might consider it "primitive" or "low-fi" or not art at all, but ballpoint actually requires a great deal of patience and discipline. I appreciate when people devote time to their chosen craft and you definitely have to put in the hours with ballpoint. It was never planned, but I'm pleased to look back and see what I've accomplished with such a simple and inexpensive tool. Most people don't realize that my work is ballpoint and the technique is actually much closer to painting than line drawing. Pastels are really fun to work with too, especially for getting loose and experimenting with color. Clay zombies sound awesome! Sculpt 'em out of real graveyard dirt and hope they come alive when the moon is full!

MRR: I'm positive there's a ton of your art I haven't seen, but I know you've done a whole ton of album art for bands from Axiom to Engorged to Hellshock, are there any pieces you are particularly proud of?
Dennis: I had the uncomfortable experience of carefully reviewing my own work recently while I was re-building my website, and I was actually pleased to see some improvement over the years. Hmm. I'm very proud of my recent work for Bobby BeauSoleil's *Lucifer Rising* soundtrack. In some ways this project is a *gesamtkunstwerk* because it has evolved into a massive four LP boxed set, but it basically developed organically out of my friendship with Bobby over the course of several years. It was very refreshing to finally get an opportunity to work beyond my usual range of imagery and I think I rose to the occasion. There are no moshing zombies on the *Lucifer Rising* art! It was also challenging because I initially planned to create one single wrap-around image for the packaging, but Bobby decided rather late in the project that he wanted to use of one his drawings for the cover. I had to completely re-imagine my concepts and eventually we agreed on a collaboration. It was exciting to develop something cohesive from our very different styles. The result is a sort of Gnostic interpretation of "light" and "dark" that says more about the complexities of Bobby's life than we could've ever hoped to express in words or music alone.

MRR: A few months ago I saw you at a party and you told me that you had mostly been doing work for metal bands recently. Why is that?
Dennis: Probably because punks don't give a shit about their cover art. Most punk bands are still content pasting some poorly reproduced photo of a dead bird or war victim on their covers. It's almost as if as soon as you put effort into something and care about the results you've "sold out"…ha-ha. I'd rather draw for the fucking police than some of the uninspired bands that call themselves "punk" these days! The metal bands I work with are generally much more thoughtful and appreciative when it comes to art. I've never had to chase a metal band down for payment either. And I don't work for free. Perhaps surprisingly, the metal bands I work with are also much less obnoxious and restrictive about

their imagery. Punks are very conservative these days. It's a shame how safe and anemic punk has become, especially when it comes to art. Everyone is terrified. Why do you conform?!?!

MRR: Punk aesthetics over the past couple of decades seem to have focused on lots of imagery of war and famine and military or police violence. But I noticed that your art has taken these themes to a whole new, almost horror movie level of gloom and gore. Does this come out of the punk and metal traditions or is it coming from somewhere else that happened to intersect nicely with our collective fascination with gore?

Dennis: Yeah, well I come from a different direction with my art. I was into old horror movies and comics as a kid long before I got into punk. Horror stories tend to have odd moralistic messages, sort of like modern folktales, and that lends itself very well to punk sensibilities. I think my drawings probably have something in common with the old medieval *momento mori* motif that reminded people of their own mortality. I probably gravitated toward heavy metal as a kid because I resonated with all the death imagery and my early artistic inspirations were obsessive apocalyptic visionaries like Breughel and Bosch. I remember skipping school when I was a teenager so I could spend the day at the Metropolitan Museum of Art studying Goya. I guess I'm just building on that legacy within a metal/punk context. When I'm drawing I don't pull punches or ask consent. That's what great underground art is all about as far as I'm concerned. It's ugly and transgressive and perverse. And fun! Remember, no one gets hurt when I draw. To avoid fainting keep repeating: It's only art. It's only art. It's only art. It's only art…

MRR: Something else I've noticed from the more creative people in the scene is that those who make the darkest, most intense art are also the nicest people. You, for example, are one of the friendliest guys around with a widely held reputation as being an exemplary father and all around good guy. Care to shed any light on the difference between how you are seen on the street and through your art?

Dennis: Um, I don't really know what to say. The easy answer is that I have this way to express my darker urges without becoming a total fucking asshole, but that would imply that my art is simply an act of exorcism. And that's not accurate. Sometimes drawing is an act of invocation. I know what you mean though, many of the darkest and most violent people I've met over the years are often very articulate and polite when they are not involved in the ritual of their chosen art. I guess it's just about being true to yourself and not walking blindly into predictable stereotypes. Life is much more complicated than the "good guys" and "bad guys" want you to believe. I do my best to live an honorable life.

MRR: It also seems that fatherhood seems to temper the dark tendencies of folks in the scene. Thugly skinheads becoming softies on the PTA, suicidal violence fascinated anarchists becoming hippies... how has fatherhood affected your work?

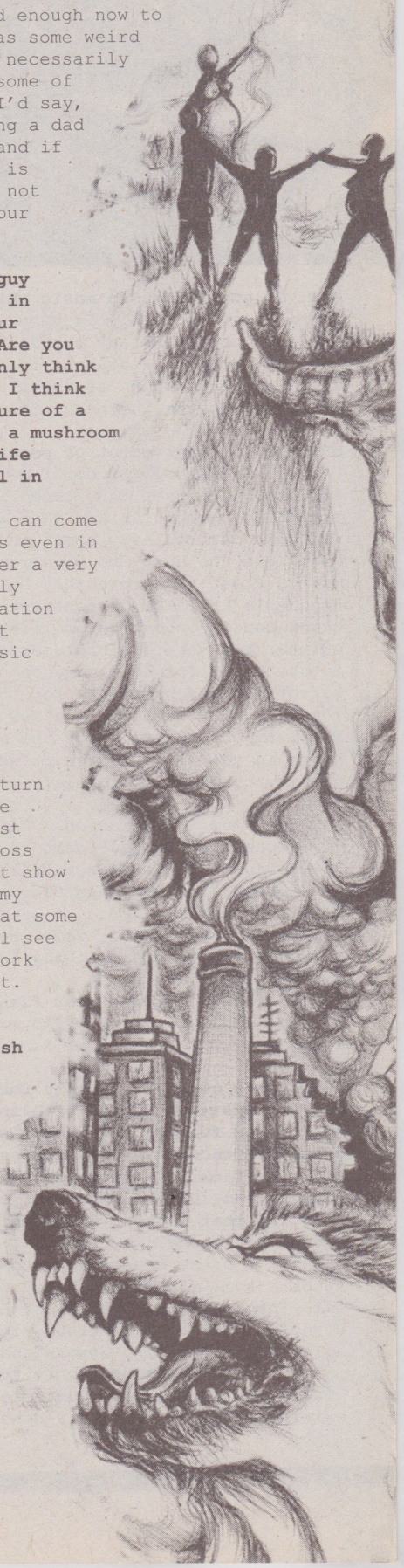
Dennis: Yeah, I really love being a father. It's not for everyone man. It takes a lot of work and it requires stamina like I never imagined! You can't just quit when it gets lame like a shitty job. But I love losing myself in fatherhood. I've remained very active in my personal life, but I've never missed a single parent conference or birthday. I'm a softie for sure but I'm not a "cool" parent either. I'm pretty tough on homework and drugs and all that important stuff. I kiss my kids all the time, but I also stick around to have all the difficult conversations. It hasn't really changed my art too much in terms of content. My kids are old enough now to sort of know that dad has some weird tendencies, but I don't necessarily feel the need to share some of my more extreme stuff. I'd say, more than anything, being a dad has impacted my output and if I'm not very prolific it is because there is simply not enough time in the 24-hour day!

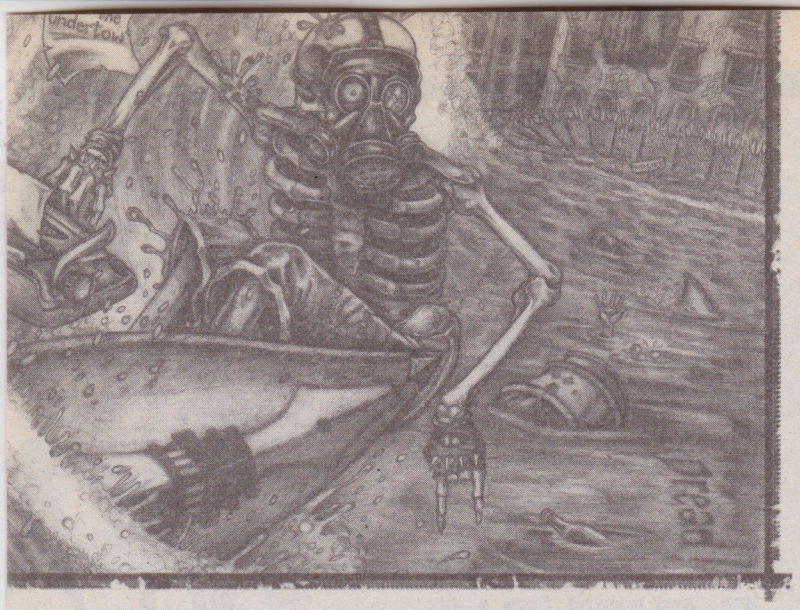
MRR: And coming from a guy without a creative bone in his body, where does your inspiration come from? Are you in the shower and suddenly think to yourself, "You know, I think I'd like to draw a picture of a naked man coming out of a mushroom cloud with a butcher knife stabbing a rotting skull in the eyeballs."

Dennis: Ha! Yeah, ideas can come to me anytime. Sometimes even in a nice hot shower or over a very pleasant cup of seemingly harmless coffee. Inspiration comes from all different sources. Usually the basic concept emerges in very loose sketches that I scribble as I prepare to work on a new piece. Sometimes the band has ideas of their own and turn me loose to flesh out the details. I sometimes post these things I call "Gross Anatomy" on my blog that show the steps that go into my drawings. My hope is that some young kid somewhere will see this and maybe try to work really hard on their art. Demystification.

MRR: Do you usually finish a piece in one sitting or is it a more gradual process?

Dennis: No, very rarely. I spend a ridiculous amount of time building up depth and texture. Most of my bigger drawings take about 40 hours of very intense focus, so I can easily work on a single drawing for two weeks. It's a painfully gradual process, not entirely unlike watching moss form on a rock.





MRR: Do you listen to music while you work?
Dennis: Always! Music is very important to my work. I listen to a constant barrage of sound while I'm working and when a drawing is going particularly well I've been known to "sing" along, much to the dismay of anyone in the vicinity.

MRR: If so, any recent or persistent favorites?
Dennis: I like all kinds of music so my taste tends to wander all over the place. I usually listen to something aggressive and fast when I'm getting started, particularly something I'm very familiar with like the first Cro Mags record or Amebix or Celtic Frost. This probably helps bolster the confidence it takes to confront a yawning piece of blank paper. Once I get rolling I usually shift to quieter and more cerebral music to keep me sitting in the chair for long periods of time. I really like horror movie soundtracks for this purpose. Recently I've been listening to the new Abner Jay record on Mississippi Records. It's the most punk shit I've heard in years! Of course it was all recorded years ago. My current top ten is:

1. Abner Jay - *Depression / I'm So Depressed* 7"
2. Saturnalia Temple - *demo'*
3. Onslaught - *Power From Hell* LP
3. No Mercy - *Widespread Bloodshed/Love Runs Red* LP
4. Mirror Snake - LP
5. The Devil's Blood - *Come, Reap* CD
6. Sex Vid - *Communal Living* 12"
7. Mach II - 12"
8. The Golden Dawn - *Power Plant* LP
9. The Gun Club - *Fire Of Love* LP
10. Spectres - *Visions Of A New World* 7"

MRR: Let's get all literary for a second. I got a copy of *Destroying Angels* (Dennis' fanzine) last spring and fucking loved it. Aside from the art being spectacular, I was also struck by how bright and, for lack of a better word, compassionate your writing was. Do the words in your zine, or on your blog for that matter, fill a void that can't be filled though art alone?
Dennis: I print *Destroying Angels* in very small numbers so I'm always pleased to learn that they fall into appreciative hands. At the risk of sounding like a pretentious dick, I think of drawing as more of a *turning inward* and writing is a much more *outwardly* focused activity. I lose myself in drawing—time and space just disappear. When I'm writing I'm much more self-conscious of who will be reading and it's more relaxed and playful than drawing. When I'm working intensely on a drawing I'm like a fucking soldier wandering around with bloodshot eyes and sweaty palms. I'm probably not very pleasant to be around.

MRR: And I gotta confess, I got a little teary-eyed when I read your piece about going out to Eastern Oregon to visit Bobby BeauSoleil in prison. Care to elaborate a bit more on this man and your relationship to him?
Dennis: Bobby and I were in an art exhibit together a few years ago and I met his wife briefly at the opening. That's how we initially made contact. Bobby is a complex man and that's what I enjoy about our friendship. He did the unspeakable, y'know? He took a life. And he's been paying for that mistake since 1969. But there is much more to his legacy than murder, mayhem, and Charles Manson. He's fiercely intelligent, generous, thoughtful, and compassionate. I find it deeply inspiring that he has survived 40 years in some of the most violent institutions on the West Coast with his humanity intact. There are also other elements of his life that I find fascinating. Bobby has become a symbol of something that the establishment finds so terrifying that he can never be released. He killed a drug dealer when he was like 20-years-old and has been in prison ever since. I don't want to minimize his crime. But remember, Dan White shot the fucking Mayor and City Supervisor of San Francisco, California right in City Hall and was out of prison in five years! Same State with presumably the same laws. But Bobby has come to represent some kind of diabolical archaic force that might tear asunder the status quo if he were set free. It's fucking ridiculous. His music with the Freedom Orchestra stands the test of time as a true relic of DIY dark psychedelia. He built his own synthesizer from prison! It doesn't get much more DIY than that.

MRR: What is the *Lucifer Rising* box-set?
Dennis: The box set is essentially the definitive anthology of Bobby BeauSoleil's recordings for the *Lucifer Rising* soundtrack. The story of *Lucifer Rising* spans several decades, so I couldn't possibly do it justice with a short answer. Basically Bobby was supposed to record the soundtrack for a 1967 short film by Kenneth Anger, but they had a falling out and it never happened. Years later, after Bobby was arrested and serving a life sentence for murder, they got back in touch and Bobby put together an orchestra of inmates at Tracy Prison to help him finally record the soundtrack. It was recorded over the course of a few years in between violent prison uprisings and lockdowns using sparse equipment and handmade synthesizers. The box set contains 4 LP's worth of *Lucifer Rising* material, including previously unheard recordings that were recently discovered! The music spans eleven years from the original '67 sessions through the completed Tracy Prison recordings from '78. It also has lush packaging with original art, posters, and extensive liner notes that explain the entire *Lucifer Rising* mythos.

MRR: Something else I got from your zine was that you are exploring, if not practicing, pre-Christian European spiritual practices. If it's not too personal, would you care to elaborate on how these practices speak to you and why?
Dennis: Well, I want to be clear. I don't give a fuck about organized religion and that includes all the dominant monotheistic belief systems as well as modern "heathens" who wear funny clothes and

speak in archaic languages. I'm very suspicious of large groups of people doing things together, especially something as deeply personal as "worship." As far as I'm concerned, matters of the soul should consist of oaths sworn in solitude between an individual and his or her "source." It's wise to get back to your source, whatever that is, and commune with the infinite. For some people that could mean working in a garden and digging their hands through the soil. For me it's important to hail my ancestry and speak the names of the ancestral gods out loud. The very utterance of the names is powerful. It's important to tell the old myths to our children. The world around us has changed dramatically, but there is no evidence to suggest that the human brain and our psychological needs have evolved significantly since the days when our forebears came together during a lunar eclipse or solstice. The sound of thunder still sends shivers down our spines.

MRR: And if you don't mind taking it a bit more personally still, do you feel somewhat reticent to share these ideas with the more anarchist punks for fear of being called racist? I know that often when I've discussed the development of my own spirituality, largely based on old Norse and Celtic traditions with a whole lot of nature-based animism, a lot of punks assume that I'm flirting with the domain of neo-Nazism.

Dennis: I know what you mean and this is sadly the inevitable question. I don't bother sharing heathen ideas with anarchists because I wouldn't expect them to resonate with those depths of the soul that can't be summarized in some half-baked patch slogan or manifesto. But I can't worry about being called a racist. In fact, I would welcome a public debate or fistfight with any anarchist who calls me "racist." Anyone who really knows me would understand how ridiculous and misguided such an accusation would be, but then there are some pretty ridiculous and misguided anarchists out there! The only people who have ever accused me of being racist have only done so indirectly, and of course they have all been white middle class "radicals" in black Carharts. The fact is, heathenism and racism tend to intersect in strange ways these days, so I don't mind clarifying my interests for people who have a genuine interest in dialogue. Most radical types I've met over the years aren't interested in real dialogue or dissenting views. They just want everyone to be like them. Which seems sort of…fascist. Heathenism is inherently and inseparably linked to a people's shared cultural and genetic heritage, no matter how far removed geographically we may be from our ancestors. It's easy to see how the racial implications of heathenism have appealed to various political groups over the years and why Nordic imagery specifically has been appropriated to serve various agendas, culminating in the widespread misuse of ancient motifs in National Socialist Germany. Unfortunately runes have been the preferred symbols of such groups, especially since the outlawing in Germany of the swastika, and my own children have already experienced their classmates' irrational fear of "bad" runes. I admire anyone who takes a stand against suicidal modernism and, regardless of racial descent, stands opposed to one dismal, grey, indistinguishable and malleable consumer population.

MRR: I also noticed in the last issue of *Destroying Angels* that in a lot of interviews you got people you obviously respect talking about spirituality and immediately followed up with a question asking them if they were fascists. Is the common punk preconception that anything European or pagan toes a dubious fascist line justified?

Dennis: No, that thinking only betrays the ignorant limitations of the movement. More self-hatred emanating from a fearful small-minded mob. I asked those questions because nearly everyone I interviewed in that issue has very strong opinions and has been accused of being a fascist or racist at some point in their lives based on their beliefs or actions. Bob Taylor and Michael Moynihan frequently appear on anti-racist watchdog lists, so I thought not asking those questions directly would have been irresponsible on my part. I embrace conflict and dissent in the spirit of healthy discourse. You are absolutely correct that I deeply respect everyone I interviewed in that issue of *Destroying Angels*. I consider most of them friends and allies. I have never witnessed any effort among my own heathen associates to either recruit followers or control the thoughts or actions of others. Conversely, I have repeatedly witnessed the suspicion and protests of religious zealots and supposed "anti-racist" types.

MRR: I was thinking the other day that it's funny how back in the day punks were all about horror films and that today that trend seems to have been largely displaced by MySpace and whatever else. Are you still a fan of horror films?

Dennis: Yeah, a lot of great traditions have been displaced by MySpace and the internet in general. Whatever happened to sitting around a fire pit drinking until the sun comes up? People are being duped. Remember those "smash your TV" patches that were so popular for a while? Someone needs to make a "smash your computer" patch! I'm not interested in racking up "friends" in some virtual popularity contest and I don't want to "chat" with anyone I can't sit and drink a beer with in real life. My advice to any would-be artist or musician: *get off the computer and disappear into your own mind*. Better yet, take a few trusted friends along with you.

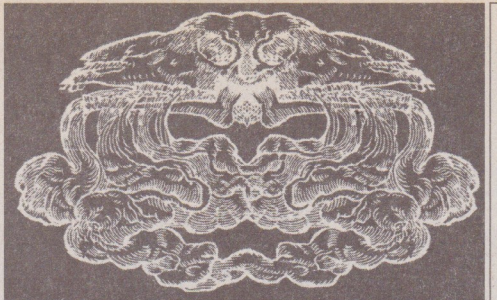
MRR: What are your plans for the future?

Dennis: I'll continue to draw until they pry the pen from my cold dead fingers! I'll also probably continue to work with marginalized homeless kids for the foreseeable future. We're working on putting together a limited edition book to commemorate my Entartete Kunts exhibits so that should be really fun. I need a wealthy patron so I can return to Europe someday soon too. I'd love to live in Sweden but I find the language almost impenetrable.

MRR: Any closing thoughts?

Dennis: I think I've "thought" enough for one interview…

Be sure to check out Dennis' art at dennisdread.blogspot.com



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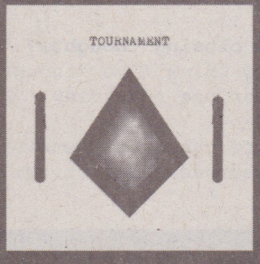

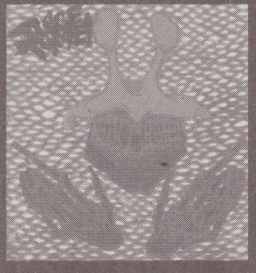

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SQUATTING IN ITALY

Compiled by Borys, Roberto, Gino, Maria, Max

INTRODUCTION

The squat history of Italy is a terribly complicated issue. The squatting movement here is extremely differentiated, and it has always been. Trying to describe it in its entirety from the beginning would require more than a whole book. Nowadays there are legalized left-wing squats that are very close to institutionalized political parties, as well as radical anarcho-squats refusing any kind of contact with these institutions. And between them is a big mess and every kind of halfway solution you can imagine. It's not just a matter of being communist or anarchist since we even have fascist squats in Italy! It may sound incredible, but even some neo-fascist groups have started using means that have always been typical of the "other side." They are usually supported by extreme right wing official parties like Forza Nuova or Movimento Sociale Fiamma Tricolore—two-faced parties that flirt with the official right-wing of Berlusconi, but on the other side use more and more Nazi iconography and "old-school" fascist methods like beating up, stabbing, and sometimes even killing people in the streets. While right and left wing officials try to legitimatize 1943-1945-era fascism again as a form of patriotism by trying to put partisans and young people who joined the fascist army on the same level, racist and neo-fascists effectively have a social feedback. And since they are usually ignored or protected by police they are able to squat places, something that would be unbelievable years ago.

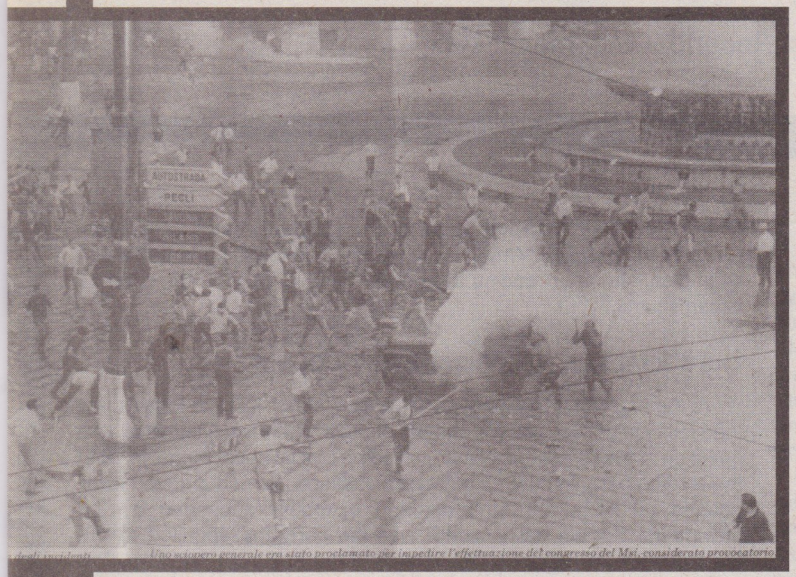
It's not our aim to talk about this form of degenerated squatting, but rather to give a quick outlook on squatting history and its relationship to the punk movement. Italian readers may find it superficial, but regardless of the many differences between one squat and another, each city has its own history and even single squat has changed a lot with the passing years. But it's going to be complicated for foreign readers. It has always been very hard to explain to punk bands coming from abroad the nature of the venues they are playing in, and even harder if they are playing more concerts in different cities. I still remember See You in Hell and Gride coming from Czech Republic and being stunned by all the Lenin effigies in the legalized squat they were playing (CSA Dordoni in Cremona) after having lived for years through the past communist regime. The day after they played at Al Confino in Cesena, an anarchist illegal squat where everybody hated Lenin. Why all those differences? Why punk anyway? The following is just a few examples, and after reading this you'll hopefully be less surprised by Italian squats.

THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the end of the '70s Italy was a real big mess, just like today since the crisis is not over yet. It's not easy to sum up in few lines what was going on at the time, so we'll mention some crucial happenings. In 1960 the leading party in Italy, Democrazia Cristiana, formed a government headed by Fernando Tambroni and externally supported by the Movimento Sociale Italiano. MSI was the party that reunited all the fascists after the demise of the regime of the Second World War. The main attempt was to exclude the PCI, the Italian Communist Party, from political life. It was the first time since 1945 that fascists managed to rule the country, even if indirectly. In reaction to the MSI Congress several riots started in the north of Italy, the most famous one in Genova, led by ex-partisans, harbor workers, and many young people. Several thousand people forced the fascists to dismiss the Congress. This event showed the great power that the anti-fascists and the communists had, and the huge support they could get from common people. Repression started right after and it culminated with seven people being killed by police in Reggio Emilia a few months later. The eventual result was that Tambroni's government lasted only four months. Not a real victory, because after that the not-so-secret coalition made up by fascists, the CIA, army institutions, other public workers (politicians, policemen, judges, journalists, lobbies…), and deviated masons realized that finding a way to defeat the uprising Communist Party was a priority.

It was the beginning of the Strategy of Tension years. The main idea was to lead the population to panic through several terrorist acts for which the Communists were to be blamed by media and politicians. This would eventually lead to a strong claim that law and order would be assured by the army and a right-wing authoritarian government. Extreme right-wing groups killed hundreds of people and blamed anarchists and communists. One of the most famous instances was the slaughter in Piazza Fontana in Milano on December 12, 1969 when sixteen people died after a bomb explosion. Some anarchists were charged for it, including Pinelli who "mysteriously" died in police

custody three days later. Pino Rauti was one of the fascists involved. He was the founder of the MSI and of the extreme right group Ordine Nuovo, and his daughter is now wife of Gianni Alemanno, the current mayor of Rome. Many other attacks happened throughout the following weeks and months. As the years went by some fascist terrorists were



Uno sciopero generale era stato proclamato per impedire l'effettuazione del congresso del Msi, considerato provocatorio

eventually charged, and after trials lasting years and years several fascists were even found guilty, but due to a lot of political pressures and bureaucratic issues they have never been condemned, though everybody knows what really happened.

In October 1970 the infamous General Junio Valerio Borghese, known for his cooperation with the Nazis during Second World War and with MSI members, attempted a coup d'état supported in part by the national army and the CIA, but when everything was ready to go he was mysteriously ordered to stop. The Strategy of Tension went on. In the meanwhile the streets were exploding: rallies, strikes...in 1977 the police killed the student Francesco Lorusso in Bologna. Three days of bloody encounters followed that event and the tanks gathered by the army in the streets of Bologna would become a recurrent nightmare for the Italian activists. On August 2, 1980 85 people died after the explosion of a bomb hidden in the waiting room of the railway station in Bologna. Several fascist terrorists were condemned, and among the people involved were Roberto Fiore, founder of the fascist political party Forza Nuova and now Deputy in the European Parliament. During the '70s a kind of low intensity civil war went on, repression was very strong and several activists chose to be clandestine, and loaded up on weapons. That situation remained the same until the early '80s.

OCCUPATIONS THROUGH THE '70s

Throughout this particularly complex scenery there were occupations of abandoned places. Italy has been always peculiar for its large amount of extra-parliamentary groups, i.e. political groups not linked to any official party or institution. Those groups were often very different from one another and even conflicted: Marxist-Leninist, Trotskyist, Maoist, worker-ist, and also several anarcho-communist, anarchist, and generally libertarian groups. There were many differences among them, but all of them wanted to walk their own paths and represent themselves. It used to be called "autogestione," i.e. self-management. It's a pretty neutral word, it's just about "Do It Yourself," but it gained more and more political meaning, a reaction against institutionalized powers that want to control everything. "Autogestione" is an important word when talking about occupied places because it's probably the only term that can be considered a *fil-rouge* among all the different experiences, regardless of political details, geography, etc.

In the early '70s extra-parliamentary left-wing groups shaped themselves as party-like organizations: Potere Operaio, Lotta Continua, Movimento Studentesco. All of them collapsed anyway. The very first politically aware occupations started in the mid '70s. There are several factors involved… we want to keep it simple but we have to mention:

1) Economic crisis. After the '50s/'60s growth, big industries slowed down their activities and sometimes went bankrupt. Many people lost their jobs and some lost their houses. If it was considered "common" to work in a factory, from here on it was "normal" to be unemployed.

2) In the '50s/'60s thousands of people moved from the rural areas, and moreover from the south, to the big northern industrialized cities, which became bigger and bigger around the factories. The growth was totally chaotic, without social and cultural policies to manage the development of urban territory.

3) Thousands of young people grew up in ghetto districts, and for many of them the only way to survive was creating alternative cultural forms that conflicted with dominant culture.

Those young people were the propulsive force for the first squatting movement; they were called "Circoli del Proletariato Giovanile," [Proletarian Youth Circles]. They were workers' sons and daughters, and they hung around in the streets of industrial districts, which contained buildings where the workers lived. The main idea was to take back spaces, and make them free and use them in a constructive way as a starting point to change their reality. A lot of different social and cultural activities helped their aim and the Circles became very active in the territory. Many people became involved in the occupations, and sometimes even whole districts took part in "self-managing" the circles. They were often very critical of the extra-parliamentary groups inability to talk to the people. As a result, many activists abandoned those groups and entered the Circles. The circles were places for alternative music, theatre, and art in general, and eventually self price-reduction campaigns started, often entire districts self-reduced the prices of gas, water, and electricity.

Dismissed areas also became squatted, which was something new. There was a whole movement in 1977 that was a partial inheritance of the Circles. 1977 was a crucial year. Anger, contradictions, and all the remaining energies exploded before the '80s when the Strategy of Tension reached it's conclusion, when the major revolutionary threat was put to an end, when the young became less and less active, and only minor threats like political punk remained. The political area named "Autonomia Operaia" (Workers Autonomy) had a very important role. It was not a party-like movement like the usual extra-parliamentary groups, rather a wide movement with a lot of contradictions, conflicts, and discussions that has influenced the squatting movement to this day.

After the repression of the 1977 movement, the Circles closed down, but the action of taking back abandoned places in order to create new situations continued to spread. Many places were squatted and many evicted, small conquers and painful defeats. The Circles disappeared, and the Centri Sociali Occupati e Autogestiti (CSA and CSOA, Social Self-managed Occupied Centres) came to be. The term "squat" is more common in the anarchist movement, some won't even use a specific term for the action. The first half of the '80s saw the growth of new radical places and revitalized forms of activism linked to political punk. By the end of the decade, punk would lose a lot of momentum. In the early '90s hip-hop became the official music of the squats. This was before hip-hop was swallowed by music business. Then punk started getting stronger again, and little by little a new web of DIY places (legal or illegal or in-between) began to appear. These spaces had to cope with the modern repression of everything that is not normalized.

WHAT'S GOING ON TODAY

With such a background, it's clear that every squat in Italy stands on its own depending on the area, the city, the district, its internal history, and the people involved. Every squat is different from one another, and that's why it's difficult for foreign people to understand the situation. There are certain characteristics that we will discuss, but be aware that

many places won't always fit the following descriptions.

Some people used to divide squats into anarchist and communist—the first calling them occupied houses, squats, or social centers, the latter calling them CSA (Centro Sociale Autogestito, Self-Managed Social Center), CSOA (Centro Sociale Occupato Autogestito, Self-Managed Occupied Social Center), Centro Popolare (People Center), or whatever, but this is just the surface. In more detail we can distinguish the ones linked to the Autonomia Operaia tradition [see above], the ones linked to the Disobbedienti [Disobedient] left-wing area, and the anarchist and libertarian ones, and the ones that don't fit any of the aforementioned. The division is not strict—squats from the same political bent have different views on several issues, or sometimes they're mixed, like some red squats with anarchist groups inside. An important distinction exists between legal and illegal places.

Legal squats turned the occupation into a kind of rental with money paid to city administration. This is typical within the Disobedient area (although Disobedients sometimes illegally occupy places), but others have also gone this route. Several squats have chosen to become legal in order to continue their activities and live in the place without the fear of being evicted. The compromise can be reached in different ways, with formal or even informal consent from the city's administration, but without paying any kind of rental fees or taxes (like the ones that would be charged in order to sell alcohol or having live music events), although some of these spaces have no substantial differences from regular bars or discotheques. In the Autonomy and anarcho areas it is more common to keep self-management and occupation linked without any compromise, even at the cost of several evictions and consequent trials.

The Disobedients usually focus their activities on subjects like immigration, anti-prohibitionism, students' claims; they care a lot about the mass media's coverage of what they are doing (sometimes even more than actions themselves). They are often part of institutionalized parties. The biggest Disobedient squats earn a lot of money and several people even make a living off the many activities since prices there are often not different from regular bars.

Illegal squats linked to Autonomy barely exist because younger people have not replaced the previous generation. Those squats have always cared a lot about the relationship with the surrounding area and neighborhood, and they are often linked to movements supporting the right to have a house, and they often encourage immigrants to squat places. Many internal contrasts have led several Autonomy squats to go the way of the Disobedients. Many no longer continue to refuse legalization, self-income, and relationships with institutions. Nowadays some of them can hardly be labeled as communist or anarchist.

Anarchist squats generally have no relationships with institutions, they are the most radical, and they usually have the hardest time with police and state repression. They are usually more into DIY music, animal-rights, struggles against prisons, etc. and squatting is often the only chance to have a place to live. Due to ongoing evictions those collectives are forced to squat places more frequently, so temporary occupations are sometimes a useful practice in order to reach a more stable situation.

Most of the squats in Italy fall in these descriptions, but this is just an approximation. Due to the radicalism of many of them, and in order the respect the individuality of each squat, we have decided not to mention any particular names

ITALIAN LAWS AND POLICE REACTION TO SQUATTING

Italian laws are definitely backwards concerning many issues. This is both bad and good from our point of view. Our penal code has many of the same aspects as the Fascist regime for crimes like conspiracy, subversive association etc., but there are no clear laws concerning occupation. The most similar crime is "ground or building invasion." The penalty for it is no more than two years of jail. People squatting places have also been charged for electricity theft, vandalism, and other similar things that don't have heavy penalties. This is the only one positive aspect; an Italian squatter is usually more concerned with other repressive tactics such as being charged for subversive association. Investigations and trials can last for years; meanwhile activists are searched, and put in jail on preventive detention (sometimes for more than one year).

Some activists charged with resisting arrest (which is a usual charge after rallies) have recently been sentenced to seven years, a little less than homicide, twice the time spent for rape. Add to this a police force that is fascist at the core (soon after the ending of WWII all police and

army officers linked to the partisans movement were replaced with ex-fascists), and everybody still remembers the slaughter at the G8 meeting in Geneva in 2001.

Reaction towards an occupation varies according to the owner of the building and shifts with the political climate. Occupations are tolerated or evicted immediately according to proximity to elections, and given how much the collective is known or their relationship with the territory, or depending on how much the owner demands from institutions. Usually the local administration is in charge of evictions, and unleashes the police to evict spaces according to convenience. Evictions are always political, never a mere matter of law and order. Sometimes evictions are violent and unexpected, sometimes squatters are informally noticed before it. For example, housing occupations in Frieze are often tolerated because they solve the big problem of housing, and the city council would rather not come up with a better solution. Sometimes squatting is the only way to get people off the streets.

THE FUTURE

While some places choose to become legal, like the squats in northern Europe, several others choose the illegal path and they are encountering a repression that is getting stronger and stronger from both left and right wing governments. So it's getting more common to see people from different political ideologies and experiences gathering together to keep on the work. A claim for cooperation between different squats is sometimes necessary in some cities because of the weight of repression. Actually, all official parties claim for safety for all citizens, and squats are one of the main targets (as well as immigrants) as a source of illegality. Times are getting harder and harder.

PUNK AND SQUATTING

Excerpt from an interview with Uart Punk from Messina (Sicily)

Q: Your live tape was recorded at the "Festival dell'Unità" (i.e. Italian Communist Party official fest). In the south are there any places to play outside of those with defined political boundaries, and are there any squats or anarchist centers?

A: Not right now. We don't know about any squats or anarchist centers or any other kind of place that could have organized concerts off the "traditional circuits" (which are rather lame). We agreed to play at the Festival dell'Unità because it was the only chance to play for free in our city (to play at all!!). Anyway, we showed everybody our views with flyers and slides during our concert and this caused some problems.

Excerpt from an interview with Raf Punk from Bologna.

Q: What about your political activities?

A: Here in Bologna we have a close relationship with the anarchist movement, as well as with some autonomy groups. There are a couple of groups here in Bologna, including a collective that manages a radio station, and we have cooperated with them. Right now we are organizing several concerts and an anti-army demo, even though we have some problems concerning big differences in our methods.

After all the occupations in 1968, a lot of people from the radical left-wing started several direct actions to solve the housing problem. It was the time of the so-called "proletarian expropriation." In the second half of the '70s several abandoned and unused areas were occupied. Between 1975 and 1978 Leoncavallo and Conchetta were born in Milano. In years to come, it became a real movement with a lot of typically Italian distinctions among occupied houses, self-managed social centers, occupied social centers, people centers, and so on causing confusion. In the early '90s a couple newspapers counted more than 100 squats in Italy. Given such a huge movement, and without pretending to be exhaustive, we will surely miss some names, so don't get upset about it.

Italy was a bit delayed regarding the advent of punk, but once it rooted all the differences with young people, in general, even with activist and militant ones, emerged. The punks were off any dogmatic path. They were not in any kind of regular political movement, they were not looking for power, they weren't following any party line, and they weren't looking to please anyone. At the beginning, it seemed possible to harmonize punks and other militant young people, but once punk gained a just a bit of political awareness, mainly due to the influence of Crass-like anarchism, many issues emerged. Punks were often seen as trendy, as underdogs, and sometimes as enemies of the ones struggling against the system in the traditional way. Punks were dissidents, and were often forced to create their own "oasis of freedom" (for some, a new kind of ghetto), new places to experience or destroy various new forms of culture or art, all in a free, non-traditional, individualistic way.

The political punks became fundamental, against authority, and engaged in issues like animal-rights, environmentalism, anti-sexism, pacifism, etc. They used counter-information and direct action to inform the public of their views. That was the Crass approach—a new form of anarchism came about with punk that had little to do with the classic authors. The punks in Bologna, where Jumpy/Helena Velena was active with Raf Punk and Attack Punk Records, were the first Italians to get Crass' message. During the mid '80s, Gianluca of Disper-Azione used to write articles about punks in the monthly anti-militarist *Senza Patria* magazine (Without Fatherland), which also released the *Sutura Eterna* comp. LP, just like the *A/Rivista Anarchica* magazine compiled the compilation 7" *4 X A, A x Tutti* (which means something like "Four Anarchist Bands, Anarchy for All." Strength was found in inexperienced young people who developed a new idea of freethinking—a new conception of politics that were linked to reality, and not to the macro-issues that most lefties and classic anarchists tended to place their focus.

This creative and communicative urgency built a momentum, which helped create the first punk-related squats. It was a new fertile soil for experimentation and for underground "artists" trained with fanzines, flyers, movie making, etc., and their influence continued to impact counter-culture in years to come. That's the way DIY / Hardcore developed in Italy; the whole underground was stricken by punk prime movers, and real scenes were shaped by bands/fanzines/labels/distributors that were involved in several squats across the country.

The Virus in Milano was occupied by members of Crash Box and Wretched, and these people created the label Chaos Produzioni. The Conchetta, also in Milano, saw the birth of the cooperative Shake a few years later. The Victor Charlie, located in Pisa, housed Granducato Hardcore, and it was run by members of CCM and I Refuse It. There was also Macchia Nera. In Torino a squat by the name of El Paso was born in 1987. La Scintilla was located in Modena and run by Infezione members. The Sobbalzo CSA was founded in Imperia and housed EST (Storie Tese Editions), which released records and organized concerts between the late '80s and early '90s. The Giungla squat in Bari was home to a variety of punk bands like Chain Reaction and Last Call, as well as the reggae band Different Stylee. Bari was also the birthplace of the social cooperative Frontline, but the local mafia, bothered by the constant police presence, evicted the place. Similarly a protest against the nuclear missiles in Comiso, Sicily, also failed because of mafia pressure. Punk squats were born in Rome (Forte Prenestino) and in Firenze (the Indiano). Jungla, CPA, Ex Emerson, and the Cassero in Bologna soon followed. Cassero was home to Raf Punk. The Casalone was the squat that hosted the final Indigesti and CCM concert on October 20, 1987 (maybe the end of the first wave

of Italian hardcore). The Fassbinder in Sassuolo (Modena) was the home to Upside members, and the band Contropotere ran the Tien'a Ment in Napoli.

Many known foreign hardcore/punk bands have played in these places: Toxic Reasons, DOA, Youth of Today, Scream, Youth Brigade, SNFU, NoMeansNo, Fugazi, UK Subs, Government Issue, and several other big and little acts. All these squats were accessible to everyone due to low prices for entrance, records, and drinks. In 1989 the DIY scene was reinforced by the birth of Lega dei Fuoriosi [League of the Furious Ones], a national network of self-managed hardcore/punk labels, distros, and squats. They were following the path set by *Punkaminazione*, a fanzine that was carried by different collectives around the country. In 1990 the hardcore/sXe scene started emerging as a result of several concerts in squats, and the 7" *It's Pounding In*, a live recording of a show at the Isola nel Cantiere squat in Bologna. Labels like SOA and Green were at the helm of the scene, the latter responsible for the Two Days of Struggle fests, some of which took place at the Casa dei Diritti Sociali [House of Social Rights] squat in Padova. In the same period (early '90s) many Social Centers became the fulcrum of the Rap/Reggae/Ragga explosion. Every bigger squat had its own posse: the Lion Horse Posse at the Leoncavallo (Milano); Isola Posse All-Star (featuring Rabid Duck singer) at Isola nel Cantiere in Bologna; 99 Posse at Officina 99 in Napoli; Assalti Frontali at Forte Prenestino (Rome). Forte Prenestino was squatted on May 1, 1986 during the no-work fest, and it's where Assalti Frontali recorded their second CD *Conflitto* and created the Musica HC Forte recording studio that worked with Don Zientara. *Conflitto* sold 15,000 copies with help from *Il Manifesto* (communist newspaper).

Even punk bands like Sovversione from Sicily turned into *Nuovi Briganti* rappers, and even Il Generale, ex-I Refuse It singer, switched to ragamuffin. The music business swallowed this scene; very few refused major label offers showing that punk was right in its antagonist DIY radical approach. On October 5, 1996 the Anarcho Punk festival took place at La Scintilla in Modena, still one of the most active punk squats in Italy. Over 1,000 people gathered on this day and it was probably the peak of Italy's punk rebirth. This paved the way for the current Rovina Hardcore Festival organized by Agipunk, which is an itinerant festival taking place in several Italian squats from north to south. New generations know what to do; even outside of the big cities DIY is still the way. *Lo spirito continua!*

THE PAST: THE VIRUS-MILANO AND OTHERS

In the '70s, the housing problem and evictions were a big political issue outside of institutional politics. In 1975 the district administration gave a number of families and unemployed people the chance to take a big area on Correggio Street in Milano. Originally it was a Chicco factory, a company owned by Mantovani. After the demise of the factory, while the Mantovani family and the city council were resolving their issues, the Vidicon saw the light. It soon became both a living place and an important cultural, creative, and political center. Due to the many different types of people managing the place there were a lot of arguments. The first punks, who were trying to make punk a political thing, started gathering in one of the rooms in the Vidicon area. A real collective started to grow and it grew bigger and bigger. People from the feminist band Antigenesi and from the infamous Wretched were a part of it. On October 31, 1981 the first event took place, a big concert against heroin with several punk bands from all over the country.

Heroin was a big issue at the time. After 1968, and above all after 1977 and its rebellious outburst, many activists started abusing drugs like heroin. It's a common belief that the State allowed, and in a certain way promoted heroin to spread among the radical movements in order to kill every kind of revolutionary vehemence. It's a fact that lots of people active in many of the revolutionary left-wing groups sank in the passivity typical of heroin-addicts. This kind of repression worked better than any other police raid. That's why the first activists in the '80s tried any way to sweep away pushers from squats, but heroin was still pretty easy to get in many other places.

The collective occupying the Chicco factory was into creating an alternative to reality. Was it political or just about entertainment? DIY and low prices were supposedly important, but some bigger punk bands started playing in clubs with expensive door prices. They soon managed to buy a PA in installments and they recovered a big shed. The Virus was born, and on February the first official concert took place. It was dedicated to the punks of Bologna, probably the most political ones in Italy and the closest to the Crass way. In April the "Offensiva di Primavera" took place. 2,000 people from the whole country gathered for one of Italy's most crowded punk events of all time. While other activities in the area stopped little by little, the Virus collective became the most prominent one in the now ex-Vidicon area. Meanwhile the Mantovani family was still dealing with the City Council looking for a way to evict the place from the punks and destine it to something else. Also the neighbors started to complain about the Virus and the "dirty" punks. But while the collective was attracting more and more people and many activities were carried on (distributions, productions, rehearsal rooms for bands, meetings…), they got evicted on December 9, 1982. The punks were forced to move into the smaller shed next to the old one (where some garages were planned for construction). It was the exact area where the Vidicon worked, and it was now the Virus 2, which opened again on May 21, 1983. The collective started booking tours for bands like Disorder and MDC while big promoters were trying to earn money off punk. But on May 15, 1984 the place was eventually completely evicted. The City Council was supposed to dispossess the Mantovani family of the area in order to destine it to some social use—it never happened. Some people were offered flats by the City Council, and the Virus moved to Piave Street in July to occupy a crumbling place that was close to ruin. In August 1985 the roof fell down. The collective moved shortly to Bonomelli square, but the first wave of political punk was close to an end.

From a flyer spread by Wretched on May 21, 1983 on Virus re-opening

"After being closed for six months…the Virus opens again, or better starts from where it left with all its musical and non-musical activities characterized by a self-managed and truly alternative place, which will always stay this way. A meeting point for all the young people who want to take a stand against ordinary ideas, fake alternatives, rules, and state control over all the ones who refuse power and wealth as aims for life. Virus is the living proof that even a handful of kids have the power to make their dissent concrete. Virus must continue this way, refusing common life models, anti-commercial, anti-profit…Virus is the place where everyone can feel free from society rules and selfishness. Virus must be the vanguard to fight the lies of media that always try to convert any form of dissent into a source of profit…"

From Punkaminazione *No. 4 (Milano), 1984*

"Tuwat is a self-managed social center born two years ago in Carpi (Modena) with a great variety of people. Individuals, very different from each other, but with common ideas and intents, have paved the way for the all the activities carried on. We don't want to be labeled. We are not a punk center, we are concerned with individual self-management, and the chance to live and express ourselves free from any conditioning… Carpi is a middle class city and no one would care about our message, so it doesn't make sense to squat a house because people don't have a clue about what an eviction is, if they cannot rent they just buy. There's no proletariat. This is the situation we act in… We are not able to constantly carry on actions because this area doesn't know the problems that are common in big cities. Having always lived here, we are not ready for actions that are effective in other places. We think that every group should calibrate its engagement, and its aims and means on the place it lives in order to stay close to common people… Ideology is not for us. We don't know the truth, but we know it's right and good to try to exist—that's what we want to do..."

From Punkaminazione *No. 3 (Bologna), 1984*

"Giungla was born in Bari from different groups of people willing to escape from the boredom and laziness of city life. It's a big but narrow-minded city hostile to movements like ours… We decided to squat a building in order to create a social center and carry on all the activities that couldn't take place anywhere else (concerts, fanzines, anything truly alternative). In the collective there are punks, a roots reggae group, and some other hard-to-define individuals. Our first attempt, in October 1983, was squatting a building in the city center owned by the City Council. We were evicted within 24 hours. We tried again outside of the center in an area with several families living in squatted buildings… but again were evicted immediately again... We tried again in November, and the police didn't show up because we caused a scene towards town hall… So we are still here, but the building is in a very bad condition–there are only walls, no doors and windows, no electricity (we are taking it from the surrounding squatted houses). There are no toilets and tap water. So we need a lot of money and work. Meanwhile the City Council is working on a Youth Plan that seems like a way to steal back what we have conquered. We will possibly be offered the chance to manage the place for a couple of years, but nothing is sure…"

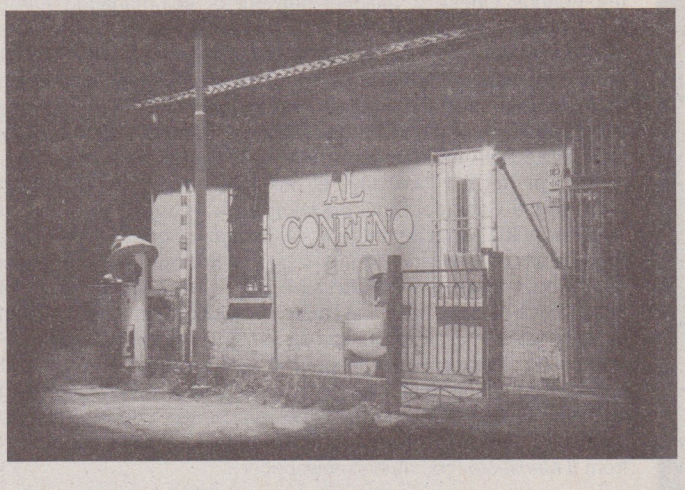
Victor Charlie (Pisa) flyer published by TVOR *zine, issue 5 (1985)*

[Victor Charlie was the main center of the so-called Granducato Hardcore, i.e. the hardcore movement in Tuscany. People from CCM and Wardogs were involved, and the famous Last White Christmas concert issued by BCT Tapes, featuring Raw Power, CCM, Fall Out, Putrid Fever, and many more, took place there]

"We started on July 5, 1984: 30 millions of liras plus seven on installments. The rent is one million liras each month. We have associated with ARCI [a group close to the institutionalized left-wing] and that's been the only chance to open a place (no other way to get a place and licences) in Pisa after having tried several times to squat a place. We want to be different from the poverty logic of several self-managed places… During a few months we've had to deal several times with:

1. Cops trying to make our life impossible—Victor Charlie is the first real aggregation attempt in Pisa and we've gathered a large amount of people, which is unbelievable in a middle-class city like this.

2. The neighborhood, which made up of communists and workers who are always glad to act like cops denouncing what is



uncontrollable…

3. Money problems—After the first badly managed period…we tried to widen our activities, but we got no results. Being forced to act in an environment unfamiliar to us is frustrating. The real problem is that the city is dead. So, on November 20th the Mayor has decided to close down the place because of:

a. Lack of proper hygienic conditions (though two previous inspections stated the opposite).

b. Lack of sanitary license because one of us was "caught" cleaning the rooms in the afternoon when the place was not open.

c. No license for videogames, though we have always had them.

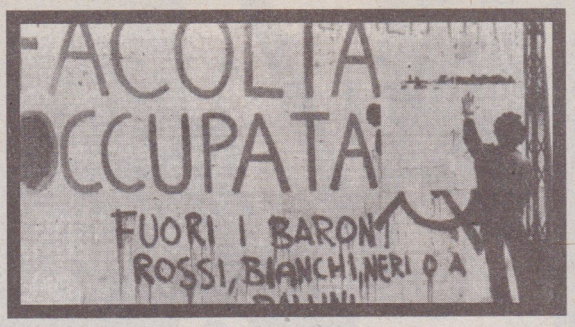
d. Inadequacy of the place for concerts and similar activities.

We have tried to reply in a legal way to get the chance to open again, and we've also tried to mediate in a political way, and that's been something totally weird for us. The ARCI was against the closing, because it could be a precedent for other affiliated places. We choose the institutional field because we knew that we were few and powerless…it's more realistic for trying to get back the place…"

Victor Charlie/GDHC flyer May 29, 1985

"Police have started a new way to try to close us down by chasing some of our people out of Pisa. While we were fighting against the City Council, police started isolating and criminalizing us. The newspaper began talking shit about us presenting us as hooligans. On April 23rd, authorities forbade any kind of concert, but we organized one for Not Moving [featuring CCM members]. Cops and municipal police started surrounding the Victor Charlie in the afternoon. The concert was stopped during the first song. Nothing serious happened, but that night some infamous neighbors car tires were slashed and the newspaper blamed it on us in order to justify police intervention. The Monday after, at a City Council meeting…a lot of cops started hunting down punks and everyone linked to Victor Charlie. Four people were chased from Pisa for three years, and even though few of us are left, we decided to place a tent in the city center to inform people. We gathered almost 2,000 signatures against the eviction and some carried on a hunger strike for fourteen days… On May 3-5 we organized a meeting about

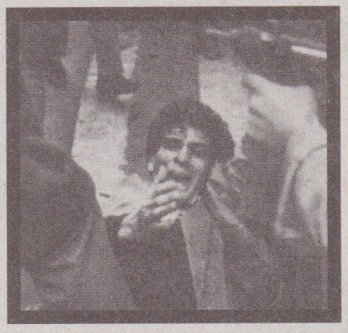
repression and the need for spaces. On the 5th we had several actions and performances in the city…and 30 of us were charged with damaging monuments because of writing on the walls and unauthorized demonstration while being beaten down by the cops..."



THE PRESENT: AL CONFINO-CESENA

Several Italian anarcho punk squats are some of the most radical ones around, and because they refuse any kind of contact with institutions they always encounter problems and strong repression. The following story is an example of what is going on nowadays.

"I remember like it was yesterday. A friend told me that meetings at Confino had begun again; he informed me that a pair of acquaintances had gone there to live. They decided, along with some other former squatters, to give this place a new life. The primary school of Ponte Cucco, nicknamed by the first attendants "Al Confino," was squatted many years before by some extreme left groups that were active in the territory. Then, along the years, various groups followed one another, each one with different characteristics, politically heterogeneous, but always totally legal. This went on until the end of 1999 and the beginning of 2000, when all of the groups seemed to have lost any interest in the place.



At that time, me and other guys had just abandoned the "Terrazzone," an old uninhabited house in the suburbs, which was our first attempt to squat a place. Meanwhile in Cervia the long squatting season had almost expired; the "eruption" had begun with "Etna3," which was in the children's seaside resort of Pinarella in the middle of the tourist area. They survived without compromise in this bourgeois seaside town for nearly two years. The same collective later squatted "Il Casello squat" in Lido di Savio, and "Il Borchiello," an old shed in the middle of salt-fields area. Finally, the attempt to spread the purest self-managing virus led the Casello's squatters to fall back on the "Colonia" of Tagliata di Cervia; and this happened without leaving their current hard-earned house. During the Christmas season, about thirty people invaded the huge building with great projects for the future in their pockets, but their expectations were soon upset.

At the end of 1999 "Il Casello" still existed; the only one place in Romagna set free and it survived without plotting with institutions. But those between Cesena and the coast that had decided to choose the less beaten track, free from the ties of private and economic interests, far away from every logic of institutionalized politics, still had so much to give.

Eight years of squatting, struggle and self-managing without any tie or compromise. Eight years being proud of a deeply lived existence. Eight years of squatting, dreams, and revolutionary outburst. Eight years of insurmountable problems faced and solved together. Eight years between joys and worries, satisfactions and disappointments, friends and enemies. Eight years to which I devoted the more sincere part of myself.

It seems like yesterday when meetings at Al Confino began again. A conspicuous group of individuals began to organize themselves to get the upper hand on the idleness of the last occasional attendants, and then activities of every kind began to take shape, and more and more people in town began taking part in them. There was a lot of inspiration, ideas, and creative cues. And then came the establishment of a strongly motivated and ideologically united group able to carry on struggles and projects both inside and outside those four walls, able to create the first real antagonist approach to an apathetic and bourgeois reality since Cesena.

I well remember how many people obviously didn't like it, which resulted in frequent visits by the police, and eventually the insistent courting by councilors of the municipality. They would threateningly showing us contracts to be signed, by that time no longer willing to tolerate the presence of a politically active, illegally squatted place. We endured DIGOS inspections towards anarchist and anti-fascist groups and the individuals that gravitated to Al Confino. And last, but no less problematic, we had to face the increasingly insidious obstacles placed by people at first considered friends, and later revealed to be false, vile, and not interested in self-management.

I think again with great satisfaction to the hard line we adopted to strictly oppose these negative factors, and especially the consistent choice to not agree to any kind of legalization of the place, with all the consequences and efforts needed to resist them. But what I recall with the more joy, looking back at these wonderful six years, are the devotion, the passion, the will to do.

I perfectly remember everything indeed: the restoration works, the recovery of useful materials and tools, the self-made constructions, the consistency of small daily choices as well as big collective decisions, the meetings, the open debates, the dinners, the friends, the evenings, the political activities, the party times, the un-authorized demonstrations, the great anti-eviction initiatives, the watches, the battles fought side by side with the guys of Casello squat, and the thousand projects shared with them; the opening of the info-shop, the support to the numerous campaigns both local and widespread, the spreading of animal rights and environmentalist ideas, the sharing of radical, antiauthoritarian, antimilitarist, antiprison reflections.

I really could go on about every moment again, today, lying on the bed, staring at the emptiness, today when circumstances make me think of Confino. I could live everything again, realizing how much that old building in the middle of country has really meant to me. I could plunge into each moment spent in that place, perceive the vital energy that gave it life, hear every single brick telling a story."

May 2008: after refusing to sign a contract with the City Council, ruled by left-wing, but manipulated by the right-wing asking for "legality," Al Confino has been evicted. One of the most important and radical squats for the Italian punks, famous for its many activities and all the international bands that showed up there (Avskum, Extinction of Mankind, See You in Hell, Migra Violenta…just to name a few) has been forced to stop. In a time when punks are more and more concerned with just music and look, Al Confino collective is still alive and many protest actions are taking place in the Cesena area.

MRR: Which records are you putting on today?
Pieter: Today I've been mostly listening to Queens Of The Stone Age, Talib Kweli and Mos Def. Besides that I'm always listening to Brutal Knights.

MRR: It seems that the four people in Vogue have a very different background both musically and personally. How in earth did you end up in a band together?
Pieter: Me and Joris go a while back, our parents are friends and we always jammed together. Sammy went to the same school as me for a year, and we were both into good music. We did some bands together, quit for a while and started a new band to be original. Jan was a different story, more complex, wait how can I put this right; we asked him to come and yell for our band in my basement, he was down with that.

Actually, music was always our common interest, so it's obvious that's not very different musically. Besides some hip-hop, punk rock, blues, funk, we all like the same hardcore/punk bands. Personally we all match since we're all bitches.

MRR: What is Vogue for you personally?
Pieter: Actually we're just good friends trying to have a good time. We didn't start this band with a goal we had to achieve. I still look at Vogue as having a good time; I don't want this to become something stressful, or a band where we have to live up to certain expectations. To me rehearsing, playing shows and recording are the best aspects to Vogue. It's just normal we have to deal with certain crap to keep this going the way we like it, but the moment this gets stressful/not fun anymore, I'll be the first to say we'll have to quit.

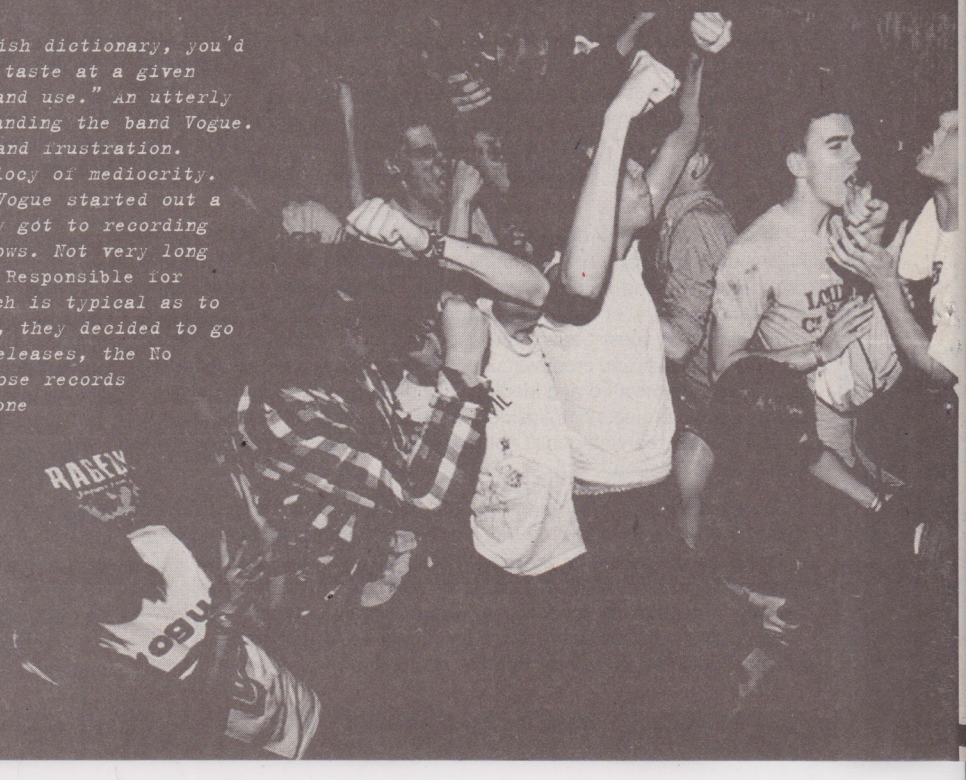
MRR: You did some weekend tours and then a European tour in September 2008. What was/is the most fun about touring?
Pieter: For me it's simple: see new countries, meet a few cool new people, have fun with the best guys around, smoke weed, drink a couple of beers and doing what we love the most: playing music.

MRR: Tell me a tour story.
Pieter: I don't know if this is funny, but we went to a party in Vienna after a cool show in a club with some Austrian people. After while of drinking disgusting beers, I thought about spicing shit up by shaking my beer and spraying that shit around—people couldn't appreciate my party style in Vienna. Fuck it, I suck at storytelling. I do remember something with women and Sammy and Boens, but there's kind of a hole in my memory about that.

MRR: Which parts of the world would you want to tour in the future?
Pieter: First I wanna go to England and that stuff around there. Then

When you look up the word "Vogue" in an English dictionary, you'd find the following description: "the popular taste at a given time, a current state of general acceptance and use." An utterly useless description when it comes to understanding the band Vogue. Vogue, the band, is filled with rage, anger and frustration. Frustration about day-to-day life and the idiocy of mediocrity. And a soundtrack to go with those feelings. Vogue started out a few years ago, in Belgium, shortly after they got to recording their first demo and playing some awesome shows. Not very long after that they released their first 7", Not Responsible for Causing Trends. Everything was done DIY, which is typical as to how Vogue does things. After the 7" sold out, they decided to go with Holy Shit! Records for their next two releases, the No Vogue 7" and the Dick Faced LP. After all those records sold out, Holy Shit! released everything on one CD with the obvious title: 2006 - 2008.

Vogue is not Vogue without Jan singing. Vogue is not Vogue without Joris playing drums. Vogue is not Vogue without Pieter playing guitar. Vogue is not Vogue without Sammy playing bass. But for the sake of practicality, the following questions are answered by Pieter.
Interview by Jonas.



hopefully Asia and somewhere in America, I wanna go to Spain actually, cause the sun shines there.

MRR: You played some shows with the Shitty Limits on your tour in 2008. How was that?
Pieter: Nice guys—really good looking as all English people are. I hope we can do some more shows with them 'cause they play their shit good. I see this band going places.

MRR: At one point Jan told the Shitty Limits dudes: "If we would have stayed with the original idea for Vogue, we would have sounded like you". Can you explain that a bit? What was the original idea for the band, why did it change and in what way?
Pieter: We all want different things with this band, both musically, and as to what we stand for. But somehow this is not a disturbing factor. When we hear certain bands we really like, we automatically want to sound like them, but as you evolve you design your own sound, but those sounds will always be an influence. Just like the Shitty ones had an influence on our sound. To make it clear that I'm not a unique musician, I will let you in on my secret stash of influences: Dead Stop, Cursed, Minor Threat, Queens Of The Stone Age, Brutal Knights. I might be missing a few.

MRR: How did you end up with Holy Shit! records?
Pieter: Well they organized a show for us in Ghent, which was cool and we heard they were interested in putting a new record out for us. As we were too lazy and broke to release another record ourselves, we thought it would be a wise decision to search for labels. A few popped up, but they were all too much of the classic hardcore bullshit. The guys of Holy Shit! seemed way different, more our kind of hardcore kids; into chilling, party guys, close to home. Anyway it would have been kind of retarded to turn this down. We asked them if they still were interested and after three months there was the *No Vogue* single, exactly the way we wanted it. The *Dickfaced* 12" is another record that turned out exactly the way we asked, and believe it or not, we're demanding when it comes to records.

MRR: You released a *2006-2008* discography CD, what was the idea behind it? A lot of people got confused and think that you're calling it quits.
Pieter: I was looking at the Deranged records catalog, and I noticed the discography CDs by Career Suicide and Fucked Up and thought about what a clever way it was to get everything you made as a band that's worth checking out, to kids for a decent price. Some people in the band wanted to do this earlier but I think it's dumb to bring out a CD that only contains ten songs and pay like 10 Euros/ 12 Dollars, when you can find it on the internet for free.

The calling it quits idea; this is far from true. We can't wait to play shows again and record new songs.

MRR: You are actually working on new songs for a second LP. How is that going?
Pieter: We've got like four songs done, and I've got riffs for three more songs. If everybody has time for the band shit's coming good. The golden rule for a good Vogue song still is and will always be is that it has to be hard, and make you want to go and rip shit up. The day we start making crap, over melodic, soft shit, please do tell us that we're fucking up.

MRR: How can you compare the new songs to the 'old' stuff?
Pieter: It's still the same formula; we just got a little better at playing our instruments and jammed more.

You always record at Studio 195 (Dead Stop, Restless Youth) don't you? How come?
The guy who does the studio, Patrick Delabie, is the best one to work with. He has the perfect background, saw Bad Brains, knows how to play the instruments the best way for a certain songs and is just a real down to earth and friendly guy. The fact that he recorded so many good records is just more prove of his genius.

Can you make me a ten song mixtape?
Queens Of The Stone Age: Go with the flow
Brutal Knights: We have a website
Mos Def: GOT
Minor Threat: In My Eyes
Negative Approach: (any of the *Total Recall* 7" songs)
Dead Stop: Dead Alive
Wu-Tang: 7th Chamber
Violent Minds: Violent Minds
The Vicious: Alienated
Justice: Intro-Justice

Do you have any specific goals in the future with Vogue?
Having fun and getting free drinks and food.

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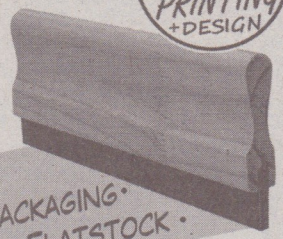

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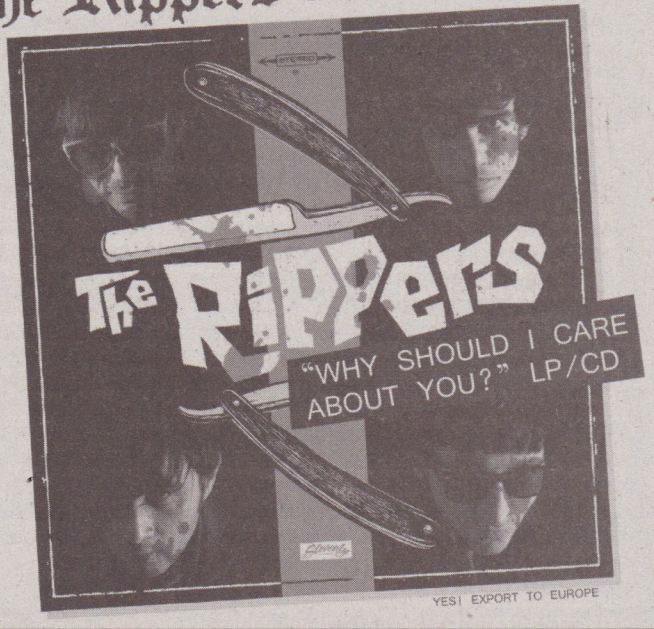

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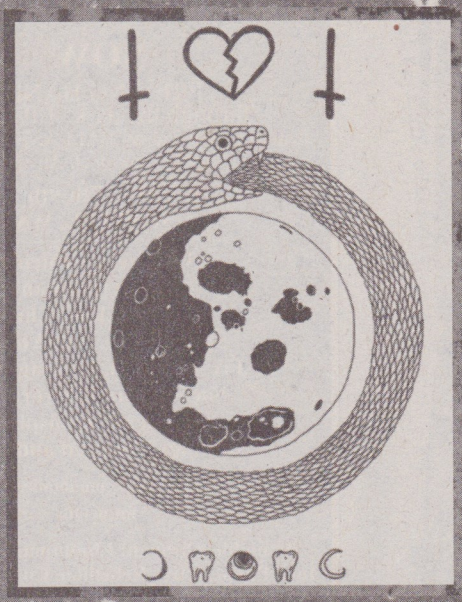


The first time I saw Turboslut, fall in DC had worn out its welcome, I was finding it harder and harder to relate to the state of music; "Hey guys, let's do a band" with all of the participants a bit too self-aware and self-congratulatory, yet their actual products resembling afterthoughts more than anything else. I was looking for more intricate, challenging, sincerely abrasive music that spoke to me as a maladjusted weirdo and reflected how I felt, and Turboslut's performance was exactly what I needed: legitimately disturbing, cathartic, complicated music with well-placed humor and dripping with the four girls' camaraderie, but still feeling like an exorcism. The band existed not for the sake of the members having a band, but because they had no choice, offering no explanations or easy solutions to their audiences that they themselves may not have had. Turboslut wrote, played, toured, and recorded for their own existential reasons. They played their first show in November of 2007 and their 57th and final in March of 2009, leaving behind the "Order of the Turboslut" demo tape (which will be reissued on vinyl at some point), a split LP with Pygmy Lush, and a final recording will be released in the future. Turboslut was: Beck on lead vocals and guitar, Whitney on guitar, Katie on bass and occasional vocals, and Jean on drums and vocals on one song.

Interview by Dan Goetz./Photos Gilles Baro and Dan Fox

MRR: First, talk about your musical and interpersonal histories, and how the band came to be. I know everyone had been in bands together before, which might explain your unusually tight chemistry for a band.

Beck: Jean and Katie met in high school in Michigan and were in Chugga Chugga together. That was a folk duo with songs about dudes, dogs, and diets, I think. Jean and Whitney were in the short-lived, instrumental surf-psych-rock Conglomo together, and I was in Roblatz, the robot-themed Blatz cover band, with Jean and Katie. I actually barely knew the ladies when we formed. We were acquaintances, not a tight knit group of friends, and the sound was accidental too. When we talked about playing in a band, I think Jean and I sort of wanted it to sound like X or Dog Faced Hermans, and initially Jean was going to just sing and not play an instrument, but we didn't try for any particular sound. We sat in a circle in the laundry room and wrote a list, I still have it in my old journal. It said "LURCHY, UNAPOLOGETIC…" but nothing about a target genre. We didn't have a whole lot of bands in common, and Whitney doesn't even listen to music. But anyway, to explain the chemistry, we are all chemists. Alchemists, actually. And while we weren't a bloodbound coven before Turboslut formed, Jean, Katie, Whitney, and the Order quickly became the only thing that mattered in my life. For most of the time that we were a band, I did not really care about anyone except them (and I deeply regret the few times that I did). We needed to do something to make our lives worth living; we were all in that precarious, potent position, and it was acknowledged from the very first conversation about playing together. Everything was at stake. Our first practice was in June of 2007, and we broke up after our tour March of this year. In that time, I don't think we missed more than five or so weekly practices, and the few that we missed we usually made up for. Devotion.

MRR: Beck, I always thought the concept for the band existed in your head for a while, or at least in lip tattoo form, before it culminated in musical and personnel form.

Beck: My head was a viscous, misled, concept-free swamp before Turboslut. But it is true that I got marked for life before we even played our first show. How's that for boneheaded, wholehearted commitment? As for the name, all the good names were already taken: Man Is The Bastard, Fuckmorgue, Violent Femmes… Luckily, elemental forces ripped through the collective unconscious and conspired to put our name in the film *Empire Records*, which is where we found it. Immediately, I identified with the exquisite resignation in the title. Accepting the moniker of Turboslut felt like freedom from a whole spectrum of pressures. Who is going to get on your case for being a commitment-fearing, queer warrior, or a cynical, sex-positive feminist who hates sex if you claim that title? I mean, just for example. As the esteemed Layla Gibbon pointed out in a previous issue of *MRR*, it is quite possibly the worst band name ever. Besides Layla, who is brilliant, anyone who doesn't like the name is probably lacking two essential senses: humor and perspective. We've only ever gotten serious crap from a few people about the name, and incidentally, none of them happened to be people we were interested in being accountable to in any way! Funny.

MRR: What was the creative process with the band, and did this change at all over the course of the band? What were some of

gilles baro

gilles baro

the key differences between the how the demo and LP songs came together?

Beck: The demo songs arrived fully formed. We *wrote* them at our first practices—I have tapes of all those practices, and those songs were perfect the very first time we played them. The songs on the split LP, as well as the other new ones, were more intentional, insofar as they were the result of deliberate conjuring. Summoning. We called those forth. If you know what I mean. Lyrically, there was a little shift. Overall, the songs have always loosely been about hating sex and cutting yourself, but the songs on the split are bigger-picture: universal topics like death, refusing to settle for less than the most real, most devoted companionship, and being a sell-out. We also have three newer songs we haven't released yet, and they are all love songs. Performing changed a lot over the course of the band. Dan, when was the last time you saw us? The first set of shows, we didn't speak at all or really move. It took a lot of concentration. The next 50 or so were a lot more loose and easy.

MRR: Between the band huddles, the samples played live, the prevalence of the symbol, and so forth, it seems like the band has a stronger sense of presentation than most. Is this something that's conscious, and/or does it have any significance to you?

Beck: The symbology of the Order of the Turboslut is inextricable from the rituals, mythos, and lore of the Order.

MRR: As a band and individuals, what are your relationships with DC and how do you feel you do or don't fit into things there, or maybe both?

Beck: Whitney and I are both from the DC area. DC can be really boring and uptight. It's expensive to live here and hard to make it worth it. If you are a real person with a range of interests, you probably won't be able to subsist on the tiny, conservative, splintered-yet-insular hardcore punk scene alone. Luckily, there are a lot of free museums. The city is also plagued with government interns, college students, and other reckless, bourgeoisie transients. Despite its relative homogeneity and obstinate refusal to dance, the DC area was pretty supportive of Turboslut as a band. Especially toward the end, girls, queers, and weirdoes were getting the message that we were interested in performing for them almost exclusively. People came out to shows reliably, if only to gawk. And I wouldn't have had any gear to play with at all if it weren't for the benevolent sponsorship of Mike Taylor from Pygmy Lush and Pat Vogel from Sick Fix. I guess I could talk about DC forever, but I don't want to give you the wrong idea. I have love for the city I'm from, even though it can be pretty uninspiring. Isn't there going to be a DC scene report in this same issue? Sneak preview: there are a lot of disingenuous, dull hardcore bands, a few hippy bands, and a lot of bratty sheltered kids who are hung up on identity politics. There are a few amazing, dedicated artists, bands, and individuals who labor thanklessly to provide DC with its pithy share of real substance. If it weren't for those folks, the entire city would just float away. Maybe it should.

Whitney: I've never have really felt like I fit in with anything really. DC has many different "scenes" or communities that criss-cross and overlap. I'm thankful to have come of age in an area that has had a radical community that's bigger than punk, and that is inclusive of young people. For instance I attended a queer prom when I was 16, got to attend workshops led by awesome people like the Down There Collective, have been a co-owner of a food co-op since I was 19, and have had lots of resources just from growing up in a liberal, diverse area. I have felt alienated from both the hyper political, out of touch, dogmatic kids, and the apathetic, insular, ego-driven kids. Overall, DC is where I'm from and I love it for better or worse just like any city. I've always have been able to tap into something even if it took some searching or waiting for.

MRR: I'm curious as to what the differences in dynamics have been with playing in an all-female band, versus playing with guys, or maybe even bands where one of you was the only girl.

Beck: Fewer dicks. But seriously, I've never been in a serious band with men before. All of my experiences playing with dude friends in one-off joke bands, or cover bands, or whatever, those have all been great and fun. I guess I don't have anything against playing with men, but to me, collaborating with ladies is more fulfilling and meaningful. Especially, preferably if they are visionary heathens. I'm not sure if this is a gender thing, but Turboslut seemed to share work equally in a way I don't often see in boy bands. Jean did a lot of art work, stamping all those tapes and tape covers, making some flyers, and silk-screening our shirts and patches—Katie helped out with that too, and helped out with mailorder. Whitney basically made a deal with the devil to buy that van and convert it, and I took care of booking, mailorder, etc.

Whitney: This is the first all female band I've ever been in—it is so amazing. The creative process feelsreally natural. Playing with men can feel like I have something to prove or am butting heads with someone's ego. We are able to let our guard down and just play original music that isn't trying to be anything. I'm able to extract pieces of myself into the music that always feels inhibited when I play with men. It also feels shitty when you feel tokenized by people who want punk to represent some kind of utopia that everyone is included in. Punk will always be mostly white boys, and to deny it or try to force diversity is only alienating to people who already don't necessarily feel welcome.

There are plenty of places to participate in underground music, independence from society, radical thought, that aren't punk and more genuine. I have had musical collaborations with men that I have loved, and will continue to play music with men. Playing in Turboslut has allowed me to create music that I never could with men. It's really empowering when men aren't participating, knowing that they dominate music and art, its just feels good to exclude them sometimes.

MRR: So talk a bit about your touring, and for that matter playing SXSW. It seems like you've played with a wider

range of bands than most, everyone from Des Ark to American Cheeseburger. How has this been, and who are some kindred spirits you've met along the way?

Beck: Since we all had different tastes in music, I tried to get us on all sorts of different shows at home and on tour. I just wanted everyone to get a chance to be excited. Even in DC we played all sorts of shows. One summer we played at Art-O-Matic, an annual, all-encompassing, months long accessible art show. We were in between a band that sounded like Sublime or something, and a DJ set. Pygmy Lush played that show with us too. We were lucky enough to play at Phase Fest, a queer lady music festival at DC's oldest lesbian bar, Phase One. Trophy Wife (DC) and Each Other's Mothers (NYC) played that day too. We were so loud. Our acupuncturist came to that show and told us that folks were leaving with their fingers in their ears, always a mark of success. That was when we still played with full stacks at every show—I loved that. We also had the opportunity to play with a ton of amazing bands locally and out of town, like Grass Widow, New Bloods, Boston ragers Red Thread, Portland psych-chix Purple Rhinestone Eagle, and our friends from Richmond, The Catalyst.

We've had a few chances to play with Des Ark, always incredible and humbling, and reminds me why I even play music. On this last tour, I think I would have laid down on I-10 and waited for a truck to euthanize me if it weren't for seeing Des Ark basically three times in two days. No joke. We did a lot of shows with Thank God (SC) on the last tour, and of course with our brothers in Pygmy Lush (VA), and Thou, from Baton Rouge, LA, who are one of my favorites. Our New Orleans and Baton Rouge shows have been some of my favorites, definitely have kindred spirits down there, we've played with prog-grunge Big Baby, Stupid Man, and Why Are We Building Such A Big Ship? who are this huge gorgeous junkyard cabaret. The official shows at SXSW are sort of a joke, at least the weird industry stuff. It's like being trapped inside of MySpace or something. But the chance to meet up with all sorts of friends and walk past, like, Metallica en route to a great DIY show with bands from all over is sweet. The novelty of being at a huge music festival is fun enough, but I wouldn't advise anyone to stay for three days like we did, unless you're trying to make it big or something. Which would make you a fool, because I'm pretty sure bands don't even really make it big anymore. Yuk it up while you can. 2012 fast approaches.

MRR: Whitney, I'm interested in hearing more about your experiences with owning and touring in a veggie oil van.

Whitney: All the tours we've taken the van out on have run on diesel since it's really hard to transport veggie oil. I hope to find some connections with people doing similar things. Right now I rent the van out for regional trips and tours. It's scary investing so much into it, but exciting to resist oil. I now attend a technical school for mechanics that I hope to apply to the project and expand. I would love to have a veggie oil drop of/filtration station that has a co-op style car shop. The van has been a dream of mine ever since I heard of running vehicles on veggie oil, which was reinforced when my brother joined the military. It has taken me years for it to come this far, and I want to take it as far as I can. I've always have hated how so many people in punk complain and feel sorry for themselves instead of taking that energy to create. My job at a worker owned food co-op has definitely inspired me to do things through alternatively run businesses.

MRR: Was the last tour any different with you all knowing that it was the final one for the band?

Beck: Have you ever read a book and after you read each page, you tear it out and set it on fire? Ever watch someone die doped up on so much medication that the discomfort they are experiencing is completely unrelated to their illness? Ever burn a house down before you get evicted? Ever come down from a magical mushroom journey and stop seeing ancient light beaming from the figures of your friends, and instead see terrible creatures dying on barren shores? In order to make the tour as difficult and miserable as possible for ourselves, we decided to avoid talking about anything real with each other for the duration of the tour, or communicating empathetically, or trying to support one another, and instead focused on bringing too many people in the van and cultivating our character flaws. It was a social experiment that we inflicted on ourselves, probably due to the new COINTELPRO-esque personality-hijacking chips the CIA implanted in each of us at the beginning of this calendar year.

MRR: What were the reasons for Turboslut breaking up? You all were supposed to come out west!

Beck: Because music is done. Jean took the second star to the right and ended up in the desert. She could be anywhere by now—peddling her crafts at a funky Santa Fe art fair, or sorting raw meat for a pack of amiable but indifferent wolfdogs. And Katie needed more time to dedicate to her career as a professional sunglasses tester. Priorities are priorities. Whitney is becoming a mechanical engineer, and I'm digging a hole to the center of the earth and writing my obituary in comic-book form.

MRR: Picks for lady and/or queer role models/ antiheroes.

Beck: Anna Nicole Smith. Scum Manifesto. I can't pick role models. Discovering and unearthing your own secret legacy is each person's own happy job. I am inspired by Huggy Bear, PJ Harvey, Team Dresch, books by Kate Bornstein. The autobiography of Assata Shakur will put your life in perspective. Every day I think about Assata alive in Cuba and I think about real strength. I don't know if you're asking me to give a history of queercore here or something, kids who feel like they want to listen to brutal, furious, amazing music from people they can identify with should definitely seek out TRIBE 8, The Need, Mukilteo Fairies, Bikini Kill, Spitboy, and many more, of course.

The biggest influences on me for Turboslut were desperation, Jean, Whitney, Katie, the poetry of Lydia Lunch and Exene Cervenka, Nina Simone, Love Life, and Toadliquor. The important thing is to not limit yourself or box yourself in, because paralysis is death. If listening to High On Fire and reading J.G. Ballard does it for you, embrace it. That's all I did this week. Anyway, don't listen to me for advice about heroes or role models. I don't know shit about fuck.

turboslut.org

Dan Fox

giles baro

LIBYANS

Over the past couple years I've watched Libyans evolve into one of the best hardcore punk bands in Boston, if not the USA. Their sound mixes up faster break neck hardcore with slower melodic catchy punk, all held together by the up front vocals of Liz Panella. They've released two quality 7"s and an excellent LP and have another LP on the way. Plans for the future include European and Japanese tours. I sat down with the Libyans over vegan caviar and gold dust sundaes (charged on the MRR credit card, naturally) and asked them the tough questions about life, the universe, Moshtrogen, balsa wood airplanes, and homophobic rappers. The Libyans are Liz on vocals, Aaron on bass, Gebo on guitar, and Dan on drums. Enjoy!

Interview by Chris Strunk

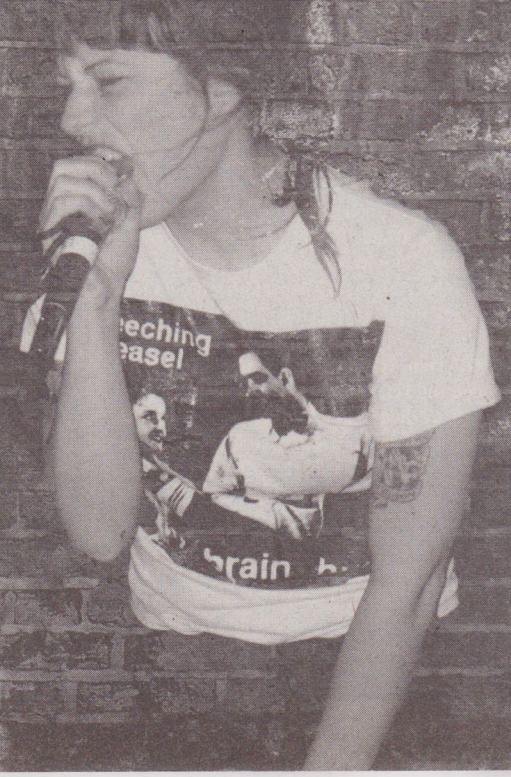
MRR: What are your musical influences? Did you have a specific idea for what you wanted the band to sound like at the beginning?

Aaron: Dan wanted to start a band with me, as I think we were living together at the time. We were both really into the Minutemen. I had just started playing with people for the first time (like a real show in front of people) when Libyans was starting, so this whole being-in-a-band thing is still new to me. I don't think I even owned a bass guitar at this point. Other than the Minutemen, I pretty much listen to Wire, Mission of Burma, Pere Ubu, Pop Group, and a bunch of mid-'90s skate punk bands. Is it uncool to say Bad Religion? Our first practice was just Dan and I, and he had that song "New City, Old Problems" completely done and that was kind of the template. Just try to play as fast as we can.

Dan: My personal musical influences aren't terribly original. Like Aaron said, I'm a huge Minutemen fan. As far as punk or hardcore goes, I'd say Circle Jerks, Really Red, Youth of Today, and X would be some of my tops. The way the band started was that Aaron and I jammed with our buddy Alex one night, so I figured Aaron and I could do something full time. I wanted to do a band kinda like Circle Jerks or the Fix to start out. I had written a few songs that I was gonna try and record playing every instrument just on a 4-track, so I used the best song from the batch at our first practice.

Liz: I wasn't at that first practice. I came along a few weeks later because Marcus joined the band and he and I were becoming friends and I told him I wanted to try singing for them. When I came to practice they had like three or four fast hardcore songs and I was like, "Is it ok if I sing over this?" I'm a total pop junkie. I taught myself all the harmonies to Beatles songs when I was a kid. Also, I grew up around all the "Chicago Sound" bands or whatever. I think if you're from there and you front a band it's almost mandatory to put some "whoas" in occasionally.

Gebo: I replaced Marcus well after the "sound" had already been established. I try my best not to fuck with the formula too much, but I can't help myself sometimes. Some of my favorite guitar players are



East Bay Ray (Dead Kennedys), Greg Sage (The Wipers), and Greg Ginn (Black Flag). Yeah I know, very typical. I think I take a little bit from each of them. I use a lot of reverb and slap back delay (East Bay Ray), I try to stay creative with chord structures (Sage), and I attempt "shred" at times (Ginn). That said, I don't ever sit down and say, "I'm going to write a Wipers-esque riff". It just happens.

MRR: What is the meaning of your band's name? Why did you choose it and what sort of idea were you trying to put into peoples' minds?
Liz: [*laughing*] Who thought of the name?
Dan: I did as a joke.
Aaron: We watched some movie about time travel and it just kind of stuck.
Liz: I didn't realize that for like a year afterwards. People kept telling me we were named after that movie and I kept vehemently denying it until one day they told me it was true!

MRR: I had no idea that's where you got the name.
Liz: I didn't either!

MRR: Why did you include a balsa wood airplane in your LP? Are you trying to appeal to model enthusiasts?
Liz: Aaron likes ridiculous shit and wasting money.
Aaron: It's cool.
I don't know.
It just seemed appropriate.
Liz: Because of Libya's terrorist connections and 9/11 and whatnot?
Aaron: No. No connection whatsoever.

MRR: How do you write songs? Liz, how do you come up with lyrics?
Gebo: Here is how it usually goes:
1. I show up for practice late.
2. Dan, Aaron, or Liz has a song ready to go.
3. I waste everyone's time trying to figure out a more complicated way to play what has already been written.
4. I try to change everyone else's parts to go along with the bullshit I just made up on the spot.
5. We extend the bridge to accommodate the obligatory guitar solo.
6. I forget everything by next band practice.
Liz: Ha! That's pretty accurate. As far as lyrics, I tend to write phonetically. I'll come up with a rhythm and a melody in my head and words will just kind of come to me based on how the part is structured. It makes it so a lot of my lyrics don't really make sense.
Aaron: Everybody contributes, which is awesome. Dan or I will come to practice with a song, riff, or idea. We've just jammed on stuff before. Liz sometimes comes in with fully completed songs. And then Gebo tells us all our ideas are crap.
Dan: What Aaron said, except he left out the part where we bicker like six year olds for a few minutes, then the song is pretty much done.

MRR: Dan, tell us about your record label. What's it called? How's it going? Upcoming releases?
Dan: It's called Shock to the System. I'm not a huge fan of that name. I stole it from a Michael Caine movie. I used to work in this video store and there was a back room of 99-cent movies. I think every record I put out loses money, which is fine. I just put out the Libyans record, and I'm doing a Closet Fairies single and the Foreign Objects 7".

MRR: What are some of your earlier releases?
Dan: I did the Red Thread 7", which is one of my favorite records that I've done. I did the Witches With Dicks 7", which I love the art for. Also Permanent Trip from Albany who unfortunately ended up breaking up a bit early.

MRR: Weren't they post-John Brown's Army?
Dan: Yeah, and dudes from Police Line.

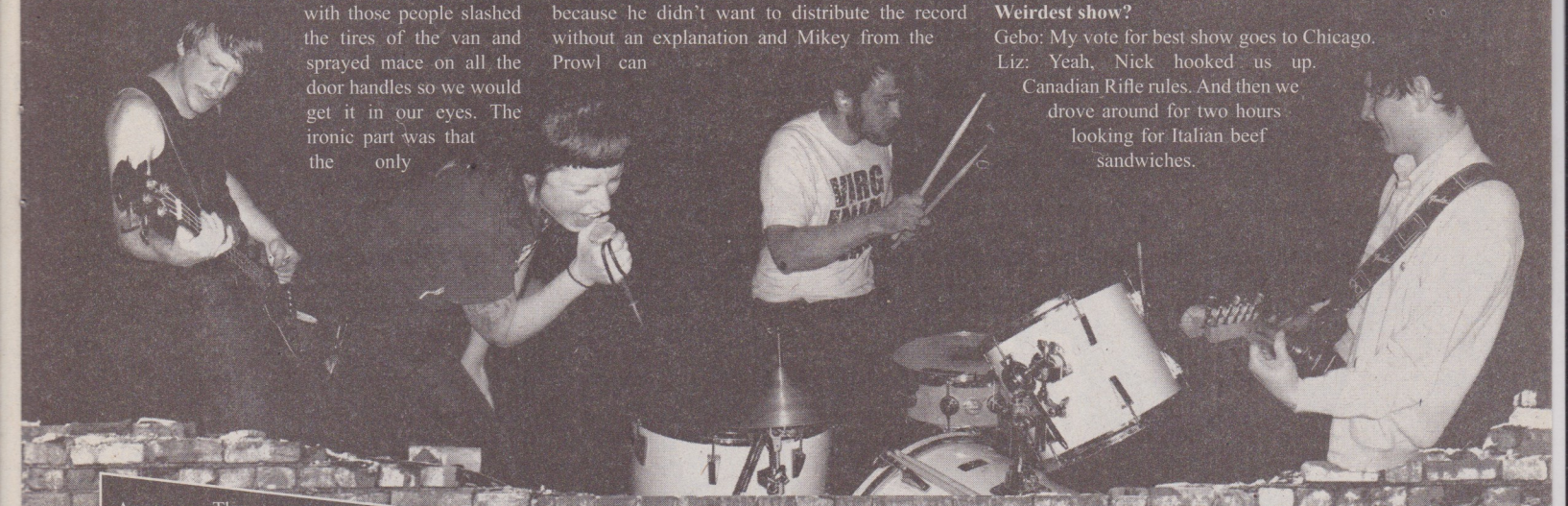
MRR: Ok, the next questions are for Gebo. You have a recording studio, right? Can you tell any horrific recording stories? Feel free to name names but you don't have to.
Liz: Didn't you have to kick a rapper out once?
Gebo: Yeah. I was the manager of a pizza place for a long time and I met this kid at work who was a rapper. I had dabbled with recording hip hop in the past and it's super easy because they come in with pre-made beats and just record vocals. It's simple and it pays well. So anyway, we got through one song and it was really bad and they had no skills. The next song they started was called "Brokeback MCs" and it was about killing gay people. So after one verse I hit stop and threw them out of the studio because it got to be too much. I never got paid and it was just a shitty experience. So now I have to put a disclaimer on MySpace that I won't record anything like that because I don't want myself attached to it. I have enough problems as it is.
Liz: Because you were in the Prowl.
Gebo: Oh, here we go.

MRR: Was that the worst one?
Gebo: That was the most awkward situation. I've done a lot of recordings where it's just like a band from my town that comes in with cracked cymbals and duct tape all over the heads and when I ask them what they want things to sound like they'll say, "Oh you know, Dave Grohl. I want his drum sound." It's just a lot of situations like that where I'm not capable of delivering what people are looking for, not because I don't know what I'm doing but because they don't know what they're doing. It just makes for an awkward recording experience because they can't afford to go to Rick Rubin or whatever. A lot of the most awkward parts of recording is just having to pretend that you like a band for like 40 hours. I'm gonna sound like a total asshole.
Dan: Who's your favorite band you've recorded?
Gebo: I've always enjoyed recording my own bands. You can spend as much time with it as you want, you know? And it always comes out better because I'm in control.

MRR: Can you talk about living through the Prowl vs. *Moshtrogen* war? Do you have flashbacks?
Gebo: It was more of a proxy war than anything else because I had never actually talked to any of those people until recently.
Dan: What was *Moshtrogen*? I don't know because I didn't live in Boston at the time.

MRR: It was a zine, and it was similar to stuff that went on in the '90s like Chicks Up Front, the DC thing. Trying to bring a feminist element into the scene.
Gebo: So basically I was in a band called the Prowl and the artwork for our 7" on the surface was controversial, I suppose. If you took it at face value it could be deemed as offensive. Unfortunately these people didn't decide to dig a little deeper, and they didn't know any of us. They started this strange anti-Prowl campaign. They handed out flyers with the cover of the record at shows.
Dan: I actually found one of those flyers at a show in Providence and brought it back to Albany and that's how all that shit got started there.
Gebo: The people who were associated with this group were in a

band called And I Can't Wait. The cover of their record was kind of a redrawing of the cover of our record but it was the kid who did the artwork for our record dead, like they had murdered him. It was totally ridiculous. Then we were on tour with Cut the Shit and we were playing in Richmond and we were in the same van together. Someone associated with those people slashed the tires of the van and sprayed mace on all the door handles so we would get it in our eyes. The ironic part was that the only person who got hurt by that was Eric from Cut the Shit who was actually friends with the people who did it, I think. They only slashed one tire, though, so we just swapped out for the spare and that was the end of it. They also threw a bunch of pieces of paper with Unbroken lyrics all over the van. Also we had an altercation with Kent from Ebullition because he didn't want to distribute the record without an explanation and Mikey from the Prowl can be—I'm trying to think of a polite way to put it—he can be reactionary at times. Kent sent him an email wanting to put an explanation of the record cover in every copy he distributed and Mikey told him to go fuck himself. So that made everything continue onward.



MRR: Ok. Back to Libyans. Best show. Worst Show. Weirdest show?

Gebo: My vote for best show goes to Chicago.

Liz: Yeah, Nick hooked us up. Canadian Rifle rules. And then we drove around for two hours looking for Italian beef sandwiches.

Aaron: The worst show was every other show.

Liz : The bedroom show was the weirdest show ever. We played a show in Grand Rapids that no one went to. Aaron played a solo set to fill time because some of the bands cancelled. And then this kid came up to us and said we could play in his house in Muskegon, which is about 45 minutes away. So we went there and there was a kid wearing an ICP shirt who had just gotten out of jail.

Dan: And he bought used anal beads for five dollars off the kid whose house we were at.

Liz: When we got there the basement was flooded and we thought we wouldn't get to play, but Casey came through and said we could play in his bedroom! He just pushed the mattress up against the wall and we all crammed in. It was totally awesome. Everyone was so stoked on us.

MRR: Aaron, tell us about your career as an artist.

Aaron: Um…

MRR: Tell us about your art shows.

Aaron: Oh! My art shows! They just give me something to do, pretty much.

Liz: He did an art show where every picture was drawn on company time. What was it called?

Aaron: That was my Retrospective of Procrastination. Dan still owes me money from it. You know, everyone kind of wastes time at work and I just made something out of it. I hope nobody at my work reads *MRR*.

MRR: Liz and Gebo, can you compare and tell us if punk is better or worse in Boston compared to Chicago and Western Mass?

Gebo: Western Mass is starting to kick back up. The Flywheel has been closed for about three years, which was the hub of Western Mass, but it should be opening up again soon. There's a group of kids at UMass who are starting to do a lot, so it's getting back to where it was. It's a way different scene than Boston, because it seems to be less segregated. You'll see indie rock bands play with hardcore bands more often.

Aaron: Jeff Bramhall just walked into the room.

Jeff Bramhall: Hey guys.

MRR: I was just asking them what their favorite Jeff Bramhall moment was.

Dan: Oh, mine was the time we tried to go to what we thought was a vegan pizza eating contest.

Jeff: But it was a vegan pizza-eating race to see who could eat half a pizza the fastest!

Dan: So we each bought our own pizza and had our own race, which we both won.

MRR: Back to the question. Liz?

Liz: I find Chicago and Boston to be pretty much polar opposite scenes because Chicago is much bigger and more spread out, so people aren't living on top of each other quite as much and there seems to be less gossip. If people don't like each other it's easier for them to stay away from each other, whereas in Boston I feel like if you don't like someone you often have to constantly see them so it creates more drama. And plus the punk scene in Chicago is a bit older, although I feel like there are a lot more young kids than there were when I moved out here. But yeah, there are more 30s-and-up punks who have more established lives and are more settled.

Aaron: Boston feels like it's all just college students.

Liz: Yeah, the city has a lot more of a youthful vibe because of all the students.

Gebo: It feels like a transplant town. A lot of the people who live here aren't from here whereas Chicago is a bit different. Nobody in this band is from Boston.

MRR: Neither am I. Philly shreds. Rank the following things on a scale of punkness from 1 to 10. First, breaking things for no reason.

Liz: 1

Gebo: 10

Aaron: 3

Liz: Depends what age we're talking about!

Gebo: That fourteen-year-old kid who smashed mailboxes for fun is still inside of me.

Liz: Yeah, I guess. My friends used to steal Baby Jesuses from peoples' lawns during Christmas and then smash them. That was pretty cool. Until a really old couple put a sign in their yard that said, "Please return our Baby Jesus." That made me feel bad.

MRR: Keeping up with current events.

Liz: 10. But I also have a degree in Political Science so maybe I'm not the person to talk to.

MRR: Rainbows.

Liz: 1. We're far too black and dreary

MRR: Brunch with breakfast cocktails.

Liz: Straight edge revenge

MRR: Ha! Firestorming

Dan: Aaron, you're from Syracuse, wanna field this one?

Aaron: What's firestorming?

Gebo: Exactly. Next question.

MRR: Hedge jumping.

Liz: 10. Aaron's favorite activity. He jumped into a hedge at Harvard.

Liz: I've never fit in with spikey punks or anyone who uses punk to stand out. I got into punk because I didn't fit in with the mainstream and I wanted them to leave me the fuck alone. The last thing I wanted to do was draw more attention to myself by having crazy hair or clothes. So I guess I fit in with other punks who have this same attitude. It's about how you live, not how you look.

Gebo: I don't know how to answer this really. I have friends that are into all different types of shit, and I am into all different types of shit. That's like *Sophie's Choice* man, If I pledge allegiance to one than how will the others feel?

MRR: Is it important to you to have a life outside of punk?

Gebo: Punk music and the DIY/punk ethic plays role in all aspects of my life. I have a house, a girlfriend who I have been with for eight years, dogs, a job, all that shit, that is my life as a "punk rocker." I don't have a "punk" life and a "non-punk" life. Even my dogs are punk as fuck.

Dan: I don't think life and punk have to be separate things. I think my life is always going to kind of revolve around it in some way or another. My musical taste hasn't changed all that much in like twelve or thirteen years, so I'm assuming it will always be a part of life.

Aaron: It definitely is important for me. There's so much out there to learn from and the whole punk/DIY thing can be applied everywhere and to everything. Punk has a pretty great framework in place already. So it's pretty inspiring to see people take those ideas, get up and get things going for themselves, be it punk or not. It takes so little effort to make a difference.

Dan: And he did it in Charlottesville after the show there.

MRR: Dungeons and dragons

Liz: I used to play Warhammer back home. 8.

MRR: In the past ten or so years, I think it's become uncool in hardcore to actually sing about anything. The result is that everyone sings about how angry they are without giving any reasons for it. Why do you think hardcore has gotten so vague and de-politicized? And what is everyone actually angry about?

Gebo: I don't know if I agree that HC has been de-politicized. I do think things have gotten more vague, but the ideology is still there. At least in the current bands I like. A singer has a lot more flexibility if they use more generalities. If a singer were to remain to literal while writing about a specific situation or ideal, than their lyrical options would be limited. Maybe the bands you're thinking of are just shitty? I wouldn't worry about it. The flame still burns.

MRR: What part of the punk/HC scene do you see yourself fitting in?

Aaron: The not hard enough, not punk enough part.

Dan: I don't feel like I really fit into any "part" of the scene. I like doing the label, and I love playing in bands with my friends, beyond that I don't really feel like I fit into anything.

MRR: What is the future of punk in Boston and do you think it's sustainable in this current economic climate?

Dan: There are more basements now. There were no places to play two months ago and now there are a bunch.

Liz: It's very cyclical. New college houses that have basement shows spring up every semester and die off pretty quickly.

Gebo: It'll never go away anywhere. Boston's always been an expensive city to live in, but it's always had some sort of scene.

MRR: Last question. What is the future of Libyans?

Liz: Europe 2010. Touring the West Coast this summer.

Dan: Another full length that we're writing right now. We have a discography LP coming out on a German label and our latest 7" is coming out in Japan.

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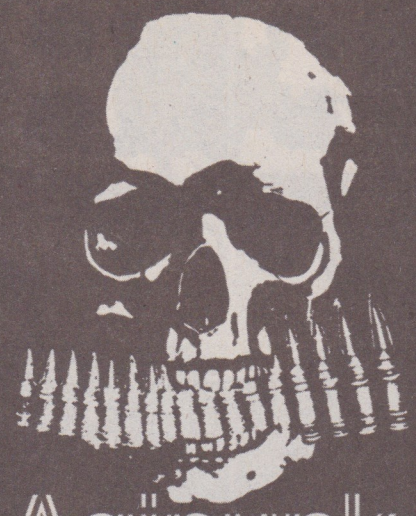

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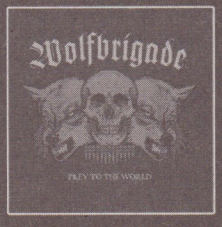

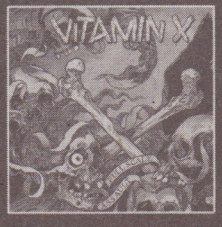

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COKE BUST

Coke Bust is a Washington DC hardcore band whose music draws primarily from mid-'80s European thrash, a la Heresy and Ripcord, as well as the better corners of the youth crew genre, creating a sound that brings bands such as Scholastic Deth or Betercore to mind. As an open-minded yet firmly identified straightedge band at a time when having such ethos (or having any ethos, really) is at its most uncool, they dig deeper than the usual slogans and trappings of "straightedge hardcore," writing songs that take on topics such as the less obvious outcomes of drug and alcohol culture, as well as the lesser-known implications of the "war on drugs," including the US-backed aerial spraying of coca crops in South America. Their output so far includes their demo 7" that they'd rather you pass over in favor of their Fuck Bar Culture *7", and they are also releasing an LP titled* Lines in the Sand, *which will be out by the time that you read this. They've also planned a six-week US tour in July. Nick does vocals, Jeremy plays guitar, Jubert plays bass, and Chris spreads himself pretty thin but never slacks on his drum duties.* Interview by Dan Goetz.

MRR: How exactly did the band get together? Nick and Chris, I know you two were in Griptape a few years earlier…did Coke Bust form so you two could play in a band together again?

Chris: Nick and I did play in a band called Griptape when we were in high school. After that band broke up Nick started another band called Bail Out!, and they played for a little while but me and Nick always liked playing music together, so it was inevitable that we'd start another band.

Nick: For a time, Parsons, Chris, and I were jamming and we couldn't find someone to play guitar, so Parsons suggested Jeremy. He was this older guy in the scene who had already been in a bunch of bands. We didn't know him that well, but we knew that he was a nice guy and liked good music, so we asked him on a whim, and it turned out to work out great.

Jeremy: Parsons came up to me at my previous band's last show and said that he was jamming with Nicktape and that it was going to be short, fast hardcore punk and asked if I wanted to do it. I had nothing going on so I said, "Yes, let me know when you guys want to try to get something together." A couple of months later Parsons called me, so I showed up and we wrote three songs in one day!

Photo by Alex Pines

MRR: How'd you find the new guy?

Nick: Well, our old bass player, Parsons, wasn't able to play in the band anymore due to the fact that he was living in Richmond, Virginia [two hours south of DC] and I think he had a lot on his plate. So I was at a show that Jubert [the new guy] was at and he was like, "Hey man, you should let me play bass," and he came and jammed with us. He rules. He's still in high school, too!

Jeremy: It wasn't working out with him, and it was pretty mutual. He wasn't making the commute and contributing as much as he used to, so we just kind of all decided separately that it'd be best to part ways,

so we found ourselves without a bass player, and someone mentioned Jubert's name and that he was a good bass player.
Nick: And he's straightedge too.
Jeremy: Yes, he fit the criteria.

MRR: What are some of your influences, including some of your less obvious ones? How do you go about writing songs? The first 7" alternates between youth crew and Heresy-sounding stuff, and I can catch hints of Bail Out! and Magrudergrind, while the second 7" has a more cohesive, fused-together sound that always struck me as a more youth crew Scholastic Deth.
Chris: I think that from the beginning, we had a general idea of what we wanted the band to sound like. We all kind of came to practice and were like, "We all like Heresy; we want to start a really fast hardcore band," and I don't think it was really a coincidence that the band was straightedge. I think it was all in the back of our minds when we were getting together, and I think we actively sought out other people who were straightedge to be in a band. DC has a long history of straightedge, and there really aren't that many straightedge kids in DC, or at least when we started the band, and there's not a "straightedge" scene in this area.
Nick: We just wanted to play fast, and we wanted to have a youth crew edge, because we all dig that shit too. Jeremy?
Jeremy: I would say from the beginning, it was in the back of everyone's mind that we wanted to play fast. I can speak for myself with all the riffs, ideas, and songs I brought in that I think we were just kind of feeling each other out, so I don't feel that the first record had a terribly cohesive sound, whereas I know on *Fuck Bar Culture* we kind of knew what we wanted to do. We'd already done a tour or two together, so we were more comfortable playing and it just came out that way. It needed to be a little more pissed sounding than the last record, so we just upped the ante on ourselves.
Chris: Can I also note that our first 7" was supposed to stay a demo. We made like 100 CD-Rs with crappy folded inserts for our first few shows, and we made some tapes, and it was supposed to stay like that, but Bobby Egger from Headcount Records insisted that the demo go on 7". I think that was the stupidest idea ever. [*laughter*] But we still love you Bobby!
Nick: Those demos we made for our first show were some straight-up Crayola-lookin' joints.

MRR: That makes sense. I've noticed in listening to the *Cycle of Violence* songs [that would eventually be for the LP], it almost seems like you're expanding on both parts, like it's split apart again, but the songwriting is definitely improved in both the youth crew parts and the thrashier parts.
Nick: Yeah, that shit is cool.

MRR: As far as straightedge, or sobriety, or what-have-you, where exactly does this come from for all of you?
Chris: At a really early age I had problems with drugs and alcohol, and drug and alcohol addiction ran in my family. My dad was an alcoholic and my mom was a drug addict, so I feel like I inherited a lot of those traits, but didn't really pay attention to them. I was just kind of floating through life and eventually I became a really shitty person. I was shitty to my friends, I couldn't keep a job, I couldn't stay in school, and more importantly I wasn't there as much as I could have been for my mother, who was bed ridden for almost all of high school. The one thing that got me out of that slump was punk, and when I was fucked up all the time I didn't really care about it. I only really had one straightedge friend in high school, his name was Rudy, and if it wasn't for him and punk I would still be a shitty person. That's why I'm straightedge.
Jeremy: I remember being younger and getting into punk, I had some friends that threw around, "I'm straightedge, I'm straightedge. I don't do drugs." I did experiment with alcohol at an early age, and I realized it wasn't for me and that it wasn't something I wanted to do, but I didn't label myself "straightedge," I always thought it was

Photo by Danny Johnson

Top and center photos by Rachel Atcheston
Bottom photo by Andy Norton

kind of silly. But when I got older, I kind of realized that it's kind of empowering. I don't do it, and especially in high school I lost a lot of good friends who started experimenting with alcohol and drugs out of sheer boredom. So I guess in rebellion to my friends I started considering myself straightedge and I kind of adopted the mantle of beliefs that I already upheld. It's just something I stuck with for many years, and it seems like something I want to try, to keep myself with a clear head and not fall into addiction like most of my family. I've had a lot of alcoholism in my family, and I know that I've got a fairly obsessive personality, and all it would take would be a couple drinks and a few non-supportive friends and I'd be a complete fucking drunk that would never leave my house and barely socialize with anybody. It kind of scares me, so, nah, I'll stay away from all that. If drinking is your thing, that's fine, knock yourself out, but it's not my thing. Don't shove your views on me, I won't shove my views on you.

Jubert: Drinking and smoking and doing drugs is never what I wanted to do, and when I found out there were people involved in punk who also didn't want to do those things, I was pretty stoked, and I started calling myself straightedge. I've been to a lot of boring parties and I can safely say that it's something I don't want any part of.

Nick: I never wanted to do drugs or drink even before I got into punk, and then once I did get into punk and I saw that there were bands that I like that reinforced all that stuff, I got pretty stoked. That's kind of the reason I wanted to be in a straightedge band—I thought it'd be cool if I could take part in possibly being in one of those bands that some newer kid listens to and gets stoked on. And I just don't do drugs because they're filthy, man.

MRR: Given DC's straightedge hardcore history, were all of you able to find a crowd of like-minded people, and were you able to find this outside of, say, your stereotypical youth crew scene?

Chris: Personally, I especially noticed more of connection to the DC hardcore scene when Coke Bust and [Chris and Jeremy's other band] Sick Fix started, as far as straightedge stuff is concerned. I feel like once we were playing out, more straightedge kids started coming to shows, and I started meeting more straightedge kids in our area.

Jeremy: It's kinda weird, I feel like DC's always misrepresented as some Mecca of straightedge. Yeah, Minor Threat was from DC, Ian MacKaye started the straightedge phenomena, but I really can never think of a loud, in-your-face contingent of straightedge bands around. Yeah, a lot of the early Dischord bands are associated with straightedge, but I never felt like it was a defining part of the DC sound. When you think about early Boston, you think of SSD, DYS, and a very militant "we're a straightedge band" scene. And then of course you have the late '80s with the youth crew in New York. DC always had a fair amount of straightedge kids, and there were straightedge bands that came and went, but I've seen people out of town come and kinda get bummed when it seems like half the scene drinks and smokes and the other half is a fairly laid back, non-confrontational straightedge contingent, and that's always been my view on DC. I agree with Chris that since Coke Bust and Sick Fix started playing out, I've definitely seen a resurgence in DC straightedge. It really took a backseat for a decent number of years. There weren't many straightedge bands, and

there weren't many people saying, "We're straightedge, our band's straightedge singing straightedge songs."

Chris: One thing I've always noticed in DC is that there's never really been a divide between straightedge people and non-straightedge people. Everyone in DC seems to co-exist to a certain extent. For example, this weekend I'm doing a show with Sick Fix and an indie-pop band, a garage band, and a pop-punk band. I feel like in a lot of cities a show like that could not go down without there being some sort of confrontation or some sort of issues between the variety of sub-sub-subcultures of punk, and that's one thing I really dig about DC.

Nick: That way you can make macaroni necklaces and floorpunch at the same show! But when I was in high school and started going to shows, all my friends were the potheads and 'skateboarders, so I didn't really expect to have any straightedge friends. Even in the scene when I started going to shows there wasn't really a straightedge scene, but that didn't bother me then, and it doesn't bother me now. I'm straightedge for myself and it doesn't really make that much of a difference if those around me are or not, I guess.

Chris: I'd also like to note that I feel like a big influence to me, and I think people in Coke Bust and Sick Fix, are a lot of current straightedge bands. East Coast bands like Blank Stare, Positive Reinforcement, I Object, and Black SS have all been really influential to me. Just seeing a really strong ethos and shit tons of energy from bands that might not necessarily get the energy back from their communities, and they continue to do what they're doing.

MRR: You brought up some interesting points about DC. It was weird when I first moved to Maryland and I would see touring bands say, "It's so great to be in DC, there's so much history here!" and I kept thinking to myself that they've got it all wrong. DC now is *nothing* like it was in the early '80s, and I see hardcore as a continuum rather than some museum piece that's untouchable because it's behind glass. Also, living in the Bay Area, people can really pick and choose what shows they go to, and you can spend your entire existence going to see bands that have an exact sound, and in DC in spite of whatever drama, you still have a variety of different people, and half the people at Total Fury you'll see at the Ergs.

Jeremy: DC's got a lot of very open-minded people that are willing to give other things a chance. It may not be loud and fast, but if it's played well, I give it a chance. It may not necessarily mean I will like it in years, but who knows?

Chris: Also, riding on that, DC has always been supportive of touring bands. Anytime that anything that is DIY and punk comes through, people seem to come out. I can do a show with all grindcore bands, and while the majority of people in DC don't like grindcore, and there's hardly any grindcore bands from the area, people will come out for the simple fact that they're a touring band and they want to support them, and I think that's really fuckin' cool.

MRR: Being a band that identifies as straightedge but doesn't play in the style of bands like Floorpunch or Earth Crisis, do you feel like a bit of an oddity? Or do you think it's become more common over the last few years for straightedge bands to play fast hardcore given the bands that Chris mentioned?

Chris: Yeah, I definitely think that people who have never heard us before will come to our shows expecting exactly what you just said, and will either be into it, they don't care, or they're like, "Holy shit, this sucks."

Nick: And there's a lot of the latter. A lot of people get bummed [*laughter*].

Chris: I mean, that Coke Bust and Sick Fix get asked to play shows with…

Nick: …Bands that are a little slower and harder in that variety, and even though we're a straightedge band, we really don't fit in. Not that it's a big deal.

Chris: I don't mind harder and slower [*laughter*] but we get lumped on bills with bands just because we are straightedge. Nick's beating around the bush. What Nick really meant to say is [*laughter*] that Coke Bust and Sick Fix get asked to play with some shitty straightedge and hardcore bands.

Nick: Let me just state for the record that Floorpunch is better than Earth Crisis, times a thousand.

Chris: Agreed.

Nick: While Chris may have no love for the ultra-hard, I know that Jubert and I can bond over it.

Jubert: Stay moshing.

MRR: I remember years ago getting really stoked when I'd discover past or present bands with some sort of anti-drug ethos that didn't sound like typical "straightedge hardcore." I'm wondering if you've gotten any kind of response from people that are into the fact that you guys are a straightedge band but not some fucking third-rate mosh rehash.

Nick: There are definitely people that feel that way, and that's awesome. I support it.

Chris: I also feel that the way the band sounds is very intentional. We wanted to start a straightedge band that wasn't slow, that wasn't macho, and that wasn't jumping back on the Krishna-core revival. We're trying to play fast, and we're trying to have fun.

MRR: And you're trying to play music you like rather than follow a formula, while a lot of straightedge bands go out of their way to structure their songs to be completely unoriginal. Even bands with interesting riffs will inevitably go into a mosh breakdown for every song.

Chris: Well, I feel like a lot of bands just use what formula makes people mosh, and they'll write every song like that, you know? They pretty much write songs to please the crowd, and we definitely do not do that.

Nick: If you see us, you'll be bummed.

MRR: Speaking of being bummed… Nick, a lot of your lyrics deal with the effects of drug and alcohol culture, as well as the drug war, which I think are opposite sides of the same coin. Some of your lyrics seem much more researched than most political lyrics, and I understand that this has caused a bit of controversy, specifically the lyrics to the song "Fuck Bar Culture."

Nick: Well, a lot of people think we're a hardline band because they see that, and our record's called *Fuck Bar Culture*, so they're like, "Oh, they wanna kill all people at bars," and it sucks because it's not like that. If we were a hardline band we wouldn't have songs about legalizing drugs. I mean people took it different ways. The song is about alcoholism and people getting stuck in the routine of always getting fucked up to have fun. That's all they knew, and I saw it happen to a lot of my friends, and I was bummed about it so I wrote a song about it. I said, "Fuck that shit," and that's what it comes down to.

Jeremy: Some people took it as like, we want to bomb bars. It's weird, a lot of kids come up to us and are like, "Hey you guys are really cool, but I drink, is that cool?" And we're like, "Yeah, it's all about just making your personal choice, we don't care what people do." I don't care if you go to bars either, it's just a bummer when it happens to your friends.

Nick: I hate it when people ask us that!

MRR: Talk a bit about DC, things going on, and where you do or don't fit into things.

Chris: As I said before, DC's a very active place. It doesn't really seem like a city when you get here—it's small for a city, there're not a whole lot of people, but in a way that's kind of cool because it has a kind of small town atmosphere where everyone knows each other. It's totally different from the Bay Area or New York where it's impossible to recognize every face you see, and I feel like I go out to a lot of the shows here and I recognize almost everybody that's there. It's unfortunate, but we lost a really good space last summer, the Bobby Fisher Memorial Building, that a lot of punk kids poured their hearts into, but it was a great space. It was the first place that DC had in years that we could call our own. It wasn't a borrowed space or a community center or a church, and it wasn't an art space that we were temporarily renting. It was our space, but that's the nature of having a DIY venue, they come and go. The quest to find more spaces is never ending. Currently there's shit tons of house shows and shows at churches. We have a small art space, a radio station, and three universities that have places for shows.

Nick: Chris mentioned some of the positive aspects of DC, and he's right on a lot of counts. Even though we've lost a lot of venues right now, if a show needs to happen on a certain day nine-times-out-of-ten it'll happen one way or another. Kids come out and support touring bands, for sure. At the same time, there are some negative aspects of DC too. I think that there are a lot of people trying to make a big name for themselves here, a lot of people try to meet quotas, and a lot of people spewing prepackaged political beliefs that aren't really their own deep down inside. We seem to have a lot of that here. Maybe every city has knuckleheads like these, but like you said before, DC is so small and intertwined that everyone who's into some form of punk sees one another. I think it tends to burn a lot of kids out, both inside and outside of those exclusive circles. But I digress…DC's cool.

Jubert: DC's the only place I've really been to a lot of punk shows, so I don't have much to compare it to, but I really like that a lot of people are really open minded and have been pretty nice to me. I like DC.

MRR: It seems like since the "Revolution Summer" days, politics or at least political rhetoric have been intrinsically tied into DC punk much more so than in a lot of places. Of course, there's a backlash to this as well, and I get the feeling that Coke Bust is caught somewhere in the middle of this, given the lyrics to "Because

of the Label" and "A Lot To Digest."
Nick: Well, the question kind of implies that we're apolitical or anti-politics…

MRR: I'm more implying that you're political but not overbearingly so.
Nick: We're not big into preaching and we haven't put summer reading lists in our records, so I'd say that's a fair assessment. Not that there's anything wrong with that…just not our style. With those songs you mentioned, there are lots of people who I feel are overcompensating for their weak politics that they haven't really thought about too much on their own yet. As a result, they have to overcompensate to make up for that by mindless jibber jabber, scapegoating, finger pointing, and just stuff that doesn't actually get anything done in the end. It just causes stupid scene drama. It all goes along with my answer above about the shortcomings of DC.

MRR: Now with the "serious" questions out of the way, I am declaring open season on stories of pranks and tour antics. I'd imagine that prank calls and Jenkem are just scratching the surface.
Nick: Alright, who wants to go first? OK, check it out…we were in Phoenix, Arizona, and I was losing my voice on tour and I got really worried, so I started drinking a lot of water and I bought one of those five gallon water jugs. I finished it all and I started to pee back into it in the van, and eventually it got to be this huge piss jug. Over time, I started dropping interesting objects in there, like dental floss, pennies, I found a condom and put it in there…
Jeremy: Mind that he said he "found" a condom and put it in there.
Nick: Hey man, I *did* find it!
Jeremy: A found object. Very DIY.
Nick: DIY, yes. Anyways…Chris had to poop and we didn't want to stop.
Jeremy: Jose from In Disgust was driving us around, and he receives Chris' pleas to poop…
Chris: I was like, "Alright, if you don't stop, I'm gonna shit in the van," and he's like, "No you're not," and and he kept going.
Nick: I held the bag. Jose tried calling Chris' bluff, but Chris actually did it. AJAB.
Chris: What exactly happened was that I knelt down on a duffel bag, kind of leaning my ass off the end of it while Nicktape held a grocery bag up to my butt, which I pooped into, and I wiped into the bag as well, and then Nicktape pushed the poop inside the piss bottle.
Nick: I didn't use my bare hands. It was with a stick or something. It was seriously so gross, it was all squishy and vegan. So, fast-forward 48 hours, we have this bottle of Jenkem and it's completely closed, and we start to shake it up…
Jeremy: It really seems like we're the only people that are wise to the whole Jenkem phenomenon, so we felt it was in everyone's best interest to educate them on Jenkem, and what better way to educate them than with visuals?
Nick: Eventually at Burnt Ramen in California, somebody picked up the Jenkem and started throwing it violently on the ground, and the bottle would not break. Some punks and I started skating on it and doing tricks over it, but eventually it popped when someone chucked it 50 ft down the street. You could still smell it from inside the club. I would also like to bring up the fact that while we were in San Jose, California we got banned from Trampoline World. We went with Harm's Way and Weekend Nachos. Watching James, the singer of Harm's Way, play dodgeball against a bunch of little kids is something I will never forget. He is so strong. Other tour stories not mentioned: jumping off rooftops into swimming pools (Chris almost dying), our roadie Justin peeing on a hipster in Long Beach, you know, the usual.

MRR: Speaking of hipsters, confirm or deny: a girl with a Coke Bust shirt made it into the cesspool that is *Vice* magazine, and was it a do or a don't?
Chris: Confirm.
Nick: AHAB. Word. Confirm. Yeah, uh, all I have to say about that is it was a "do," and not a "don't." Get a Coke Bust shirt, eleven dollars post-paid. Don't be a "don't."
Chris: Also noted, with the guy behind her, the description was something like, "These gross punk kids are always trying to pick up on the cute hipster girls with hardcore shirts," or some bullshit like that, and the gross punk kid behind her was this guy that was actually on tour with Magrudergrind when we were in the UK, and he was just coincidentally in this picture, making it into *Vice* magazine.
Nick: Yeah that was T-Bags!!!

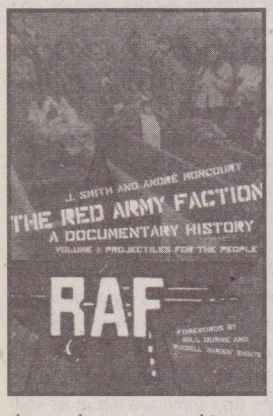
MRR: So talk a bit about getting the LP together. I know there was some uncertainty with who was gonna put it out, but Six Weeks is doing it and it's pretty imminent now.
Nick: Hell yeah! It just came out! Grab it from www.sixweeksrecords.com. We couldn't be more stoked on it. It's seventeen new songs and we spent a long ass time putting it together.
Chris: This record, I think, is our best stuff so far. Much faster than everything else we have done. Super stoked that Jeff and Athena at Six Weeks are putting it out.

MRR: Anything else you'd like to add?
Chris: Coke Bust and Sick Fix are touring the US this summer. Also Magrudergrind will be doing East Coast and West Coast tours. Come and hang out! Thanks Dan, we miss you, and your hairiness. DCHC punks holding it down.
Nick: Shout outs to Skatecrew, Athens, San Jose, Macefight, Chicago Wolfpack, and the Rockville, Maryland OG's. Parsons we still love you. Thanks Dan and *MRR*. Check out Duress from Chicago. Awesome bands should play DC on their tours. Hit us up.
Jubert: Gaithersburg.

Tour updates and more: cokebust.com or myspace.com/cokebust

Photo by Christopher Thomas

BOOKS



The Red Army Faction: A Documentary History
Volume 1: Projectiles for the People
J. Smith & André Moncourt
694 pages • $34.95
PM Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623

Bringing together the earliest writings of Germany's '70s radical left guerilla group the Red Army Faction in one gigantic doorstop of a volume, which itself only represents half (half!) of the fruits of the editors' labors, *The Red Army Faction: A Documentary History —Volume 1: Projectiles for the People* is a remarkable, necessary, long-overdue, and, yes, great achievement.

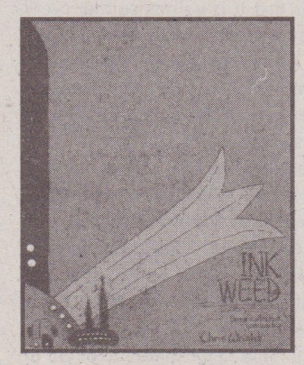
You will note, perhaps, that I didn't necessarily say it was a great *book*—more on that later. It is enough at this point to commend the care and effort exhibited on the part of the editors (both operating here under pseudonyms – probably a smart move, given that most of the texts contained herein advocate, you know, blowing shit up) in bringing the project to fruition. The group—more romantically and less accurately known as the Baader Meinhof Gang—that brought armed anti-imperialist struggle to Germany is more than well represented. Included are its main theoretical texts, the communiqués it issued to the media claiming responsibility for its actions, certain court transcriptions, and various pertinent bits of correspondence, all buttressed by chapter-length accompanying essays which provide helpful contextual information on the history and dynamics of the German political scene in the '60s and '70s. What results is, as the editors claim, by far the "most complete works and history of the Red Army Faction ever published in the English language," but also something more interesting as well: that is, the completely reassembled official and public face of the RAF. For a group that seems to lend itself so well to rumor and psychological speculation (perhaps a consequence of its very clandestine nature), what this volume provides is the RAF as they presented themselves to the world in the first decade of their existence, from roughly the time of their first actions to the 1977 deaths (in prison, under mysterious circumstances) of prominent members Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe. The second forthcoming volume promises to collect writings from 1978 up through the RAF's dissolution in 1998. In terms of exhaustive completeness, you can't beat this project – the gang, pardon the pun, truly is all here.

Now, I get excited by the very thought that we now have such a text, to sit on the bookshelf alongside other volumes in the emerging body of collected works by late twentieth-century militant groups (see, for instance, a similar volume pertaining to the writings of the Weather Underground). It's an unprecedented opportunity for further scholarship and research on the group and their political and literary legacy, and we should be thankful for that. Indeed, for myself as a reviewer, to critique the RAF's writings themselves based on this book would be somewhat beside the point, as this is meant to be a documentary project, and those texts are the raw materials being assembled; let future scholars do with them what they will. I will say that they always make for interesting reading, insofar as they operate in competing and overlapping literary voices. Indeed, the RAF were, at one and the same time, militant idealists and incurable assholes; funnier than the Weather Underground, yet more clear-eyed than the quasi-mystical Symbionese Liberation Army; committed to the fact that they did not target civilians and yet reasonably okay, it seems, with incurring civilian casualties. And these voices changed over time, from the early treatises primarily authored by founding member Ulrike Meinhof to the increasingly harried communiqués from secondary commandos in the late '70s.

However, it is worth expressing some disappointment in the mode of presentation. The editors, in their own written contributions, raise important themes such as, for instance, the tendency to condemn political action as psychological pathology, or the increasingly hostile atmosphere for dissent in West Germany. However, something is a bit off in the authors' critical voice. The contextual writings are, in a way, too apologetic for the RAF, and too willing to explain away criticism of the group as a lack of commitment on the part of the critic. They want, desperately, to find a way to make the RAF *work*, or rather, to make the group and its writings internally consistent where such consistency may or may not be possible. When Smith and Moncourt do cast a critical eye on the RAF, it is always according to a rubric of strategic and tactical effectiveness. I understand the gesture, given that the easy reaction is to call the RAF and its ilk "terrorist" organizations without proper political contextualization, and that such a tendency persists to this day (for a related case, see the *New York Times Book Review's* assessment of Weather-member Mark Rudd's recent memoir). But what do we sacrifice in terms of critical engagement when we are so willing to take the RAF at its word?

Intriguingly, the editors have included in this volume a highly critical open letter from one post-RAF militant group (the RZ) to the RAF itself, who responded with characteristic vitriol and invective. The RZ, expressing frustration with the RAF for it's disconnect from the problems of the popular left and its too-easy drawing of political battle lines, cries, "Enough of the category of comrade or pig!" And it is this cry that I, despite my overall engagement with the volume, too often found myself leveling at the editors of this book as well.

—Maxwell Tremblay



Ink Weed
Chris Wright
152 Pages • $16
Sparkplug Comic Books
PO Box 10952
Portland, OR 97296-0952

When I first saw *Ink Weed* I thought it was some adult slant on the show *AHHHHH! Real Monsters*. The way *Meet the Feebles* flipped *The Muppets* on their heads and tried to derange my childhood memories, I thought Chris Wright was about to pervert a second rate cartoon that I had almost completely forgotten about. Aside from the eerie resemblance of the characters physical appearances any connection with the monsters cartoon would be thin at best.

I wanted to *not* like this graphic novel because I perceived it to be pretentious at first, but I found it freakishly compelling. The characters are all deranged figures whose oddities seem intentionally complex. Each page has monster-men with heads like tennis racket handles, eye balls swinging in places that no higher being would dare place them, goiter crab beasts and wooly scarab kids. If Nick Blinco took some opium and drew something a little more chilled out, he may have scribbled out the 152 pages of these black and white illustrations.

Chris goes out of his way to make the beast-men in his graphic novel physically bizarre but their stories are mostly familiar. A man falls in love with a woman he can't have, an artist has become jaded with the art world but it's the only world he's ever known, a self absorbed drunken poet slowly destroys himself; the plot lines are vaguely familiar.

Wright's style is definitely poetic, and while I usually hate anything associated with poetry, the character development is what kept me reading through the entire book, cover to cover. He communicates emotion and personality very effectively, using words that count and speaking through symbolism.

Aside from the monsters reference, the other thing I couldn't shake while

devouring *Ink Weed*, is the fact that most of the stories seem to be taking place in France in the nineteenth century; I half expected Arthur Rimbaud to flaunt onto the page as a cock roach with a twelve foot stick in his ass. The entire book reeks of Euro, which makes sense. A majority of the people-ish things are struggling and troubled artists (or scientists) who's speech bounces between prose and poetry and it's hard to think of a better setting for a drunken poet loathing himself and his existence, in a pea coat, than some French cobblestone street 120 years ago.

Ink Weed is the only graphic novel I have come across that I can't think of another graphic novel to compare it to. It's mostly compiled of short illustrated stories ranging from ten pages to one page. Some of the stories are straightforward and compelling and some of the stories went right over my head and I'm not sure what message I was supposed to be receiving. Chris Wright is an interesting illustrator but his real talent is in his writing.

—Lowell Fletcher

Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women
Victoria Law
288 pages • $20
PM Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623
www.pmpress.org

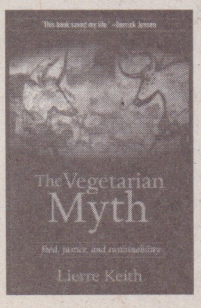
Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women is a premier effort to increase the visibility of women's prison resistance in the United States. Victoria Law has dedicated much of her life to prisoners' resistance, honing in on the lack of discussion about the specific plight that women face in prison, and their efforts to challenge the prison system. Law started off self-publishing prisoners' stories in zines and circulating them in publications like *Clamor, Punk Planet,* and *off our backs*. A lot of this work is represented and revisited here, in Law's first book, *Resistance Behind Bars.*

The major success of *Resistance Behind Bars* is that it is written so that every person can understand it—Law uses effective statistics as well as stories and examples of prison life straight from the voices of the women living them. While maintaining this easy-to-understand framework, Law employs a thorough understanding of the gender, race, and class dynamics that contribute to the unique struggle of women prisoners as well as the invisibility of this struggle.

The invisibility of women prisoners' specific struggle, as well as their acts of resistance, is largely due to the "un-sexy" labor historically allotted to women. While male prisoners may have more time to concern themselves with organizing, women often still have a slew of other concerns from both outside and inside the prison system, such as childcare, adequate healthcare, and visitation rights, among many others. *Resistance Behind Bars* sheds light on all the different forms of resistance—from creating AIDS awareness groups, to communal teaching, to emotional support, to skill-sharing, to labor and hunger strikes, and so on, that these women take on, in spite of all the stakes against them.

Law redefines and broadens the notions of resistance to include the everyday individual challenges that women prisoners fight both for themselves and for their sisters. Along with Law's unique and powerful document, she includes a thorough resource list, a recommended reading list on prison issues, and a glossary for further accessibility. *Resistance Behind Bars* is a must-read for anyone interested in prison resistance as well as gender, race, and class struggles across the board.

—Kate Wadkins



The Vegetarian Myth
Lierre Keith
320 pages • $20
PM Press/Flashpoint Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623

Lierre Keith was vegan for 20 years and is really bummed about it. She's had a lot of serious health problems (she describes many of them) and blames her vegan diet for them all. She extends her own experience to apply to everybody that eats vegetarian and, because she really cares, wants all you people who don't eat meat to stop hurting yourselves. Now, I'm not a doctor but I was vegan for 6 years (I quit recently) and I never had any of the problems she claims are symptomatic of veganism. Maybe I'm the exception to the rule? None of my vegan friends did/do either.

It is possible to eat an unhealthy vegan diet; it's possible to eat poorly no matter what you're eating. Due to her lengthy and heated diatribe against soy, I would infer that she was eating a lot it when she was vegan. No shit that's bad for you. Eating any one food product almost exclusively is going to be bad for you. But Lierre, really, do you have to rely on fad dieticians for explanations of why animal protein is so great? She constantly sources the *Protein Power LifePlan*, by Drs. Michael and Mary Dan Eades. Go look them up, they're in the business of selling you their products and their fountain of youth is protein. She rails against the bias of nutritional studies that are sponsored by large corporations who want to have science back their products. She's right. Corporate sponsorship makes for bad science. Why then does she put so much faith in the Drs. Eades? They also want to sell their product and so they're going to find data to back them up. It seems like she is so enraged about what happened to her while vegan that she's got a bad case of tunnel vision and is looking for validation for the polar opposite of vegetarianism and she's found it.

Don't you worry though, nutrition is not her only arena of criticism. Agriculture is the arch-enemy. Vegetarians, in case you were wondering: you all want the world to be covered in fields of soy, wheat, corn and beans and that's wrong. I actually agree with her here, fields upon fields of a single kind of crop, grown over and over again in the same space is unhealthy for soil. But this isn't a revelation. Crop rotation has been around as long as farming has. I am sure that some are but most vegans I've met are not totally thickheaded and are aware that factory farming for animals and vegetables is fucked up.

So eat locally she says. Sounds great right? Sure, local food tastes great and is more nutritious but it is also expensive. I wish it weren't the case but the local foods "movement" in this country is mostly for rich people. Co-ops? Whole Foods? Farmer's markets? They're not cheap. I wish they were and I wish Whole Foods didn't bust unions, but it just isn't the case.

Keith's lack of concern for class (it is rarely mentioned) brings me to another concern: her desire for massive population reduction. According to her math at least seven billion people have got to go. Who'll it be? If we assume that a return to a premodern style mix of hunter-gathering and sustenance farming is really the way to go (she does), who is going to be the best prepared? Probably mostly white, middle class people who had time in college to read about homesteading and perma-culture. What about the people who live in cities the world over? Poor people of color, and white people, who've had to spend their lives working to support themselves, a family, etc? Fuck 'em? Let them starve? It's too bad they weren't prepared for the return to Eden but that's the way it has to be? No, that's just not OK and you've got to be sitting in a privileged high chair to even consider it. She doesn't seem to be firmly against capitalism either. There is a lot of praise for "local economies" but no statement that says after her revolution, wage labor will cease to exist. A local boss is still a boss and small businesses still exploit workers.

Finally, I would really prefer it if people would ditch mysticism. Keith goes on about how plants communicate with one another through chemicals. It is true that plants do that but do we than have to believe that plants have souls? She really wants to build an ethic based on Animism. Why can't we appreciate the beauty of plant communication through science? What's wrong with having a holistic view of the planet that is based on science, not mysticism?

If you're looking for a more radical version of the Atkins diet with a hefty dose of anti-civilization theory thrown in then this is the book for you. *The Vegetarian Myth* is an erratic book; Keith bounces from subject to subject making this book read more like a very long rant than anything else. She repeats herself constantly: "Vegetarianism is a philosophy/lifestyle that, despite the good and noble intentions of its adherents, is totally opposed to the long term survival of earth and is bad for you. Eat a lot of animal sourced food (meat, dairy, eggs) it is really the best thing for you. Agriculture and its wicked child civilization are evil and must be destroyed if there is any hope for humanity and the planet to survive." (Paraphrasing, not an actual quote.) That's pretty much the whole book but she says it over and over again for almost 300 pages.

—Isaac Pirie

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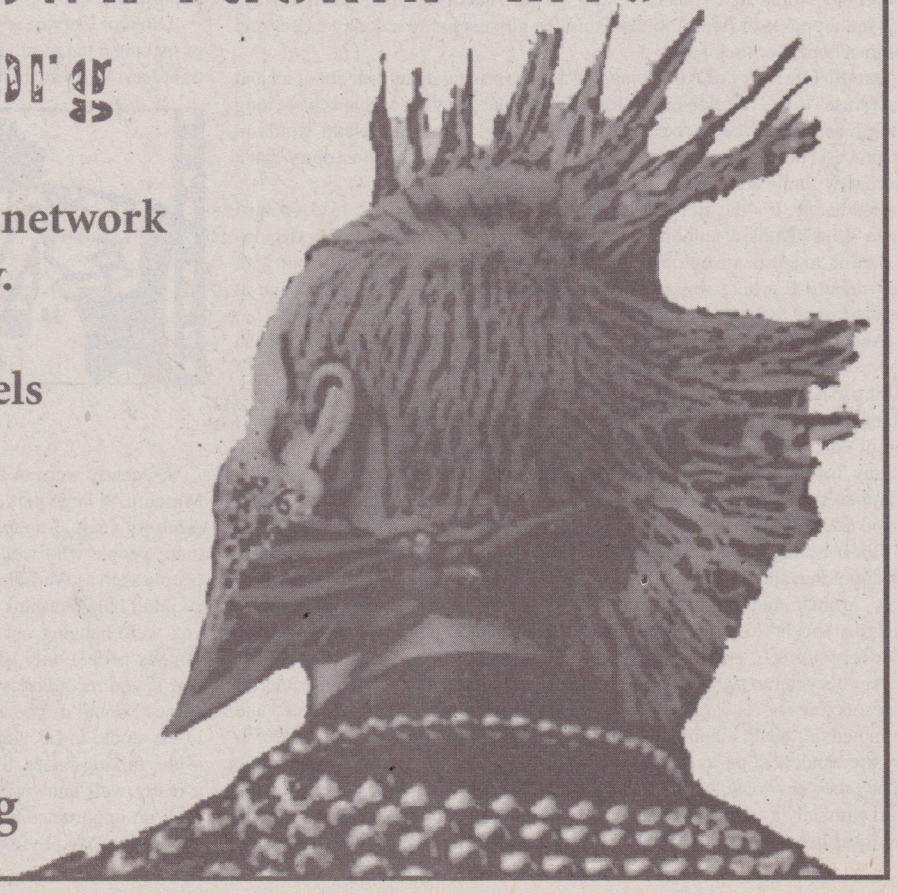

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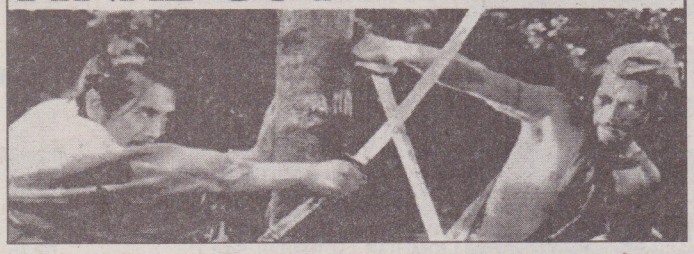
MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



THE TRAVAILS OF ROCK

The only metal record I ever bought was a curious pic-disk by a band called the Wild. I still own it and like it. Something like a second-rate version of Kiss, this band dressed themselves with glitter and make-up, boasting songs that were almost parodies of the genre. For all I know, they may very well have been; I've not been able to find any mention of the record since then. They were almost, but not quite, bad enough to be a parody band, but just serious enough so that you might just take them seriously. If all metal were like the Wild, I just might have warmed up to the genre. Alas, their spirit was too close to punk to make for any long-term success.

Anvil very roughly came from the same time period. Instead of Hollywood, Anvil forged their career in Canada. And while bands like Mötley Crüe became household words and rode the wave to international fame, Anvil always enjoyed a pocket of fans, a total of thirteen albums led to a spotty career and dubious hopes for rock fame.

Anvil! The Story of Anvil emerges as a surprising document about a band that refuses to die. Veteran outfits like Whitesnake and the Scorpions have long since won their place in rock history, becoming almost household words in the process, this documentary takes the long road in touching on a story that's alternately funny and sad.

Ultimately, it's the story of a friendship. Through the '70s, lead vocalist Steve "Lips" Kudlow and drummer Robb Reiner played around with the idea of putting together a band, but it wasn't until '81 when Anvil came out with their debut LP, which was followed by Metal on Metal—which the band at least seems to feel captured their signature sound.

And what happened next? By the account of the film's director, Sacha Gervasi, it's been a steady decline since then, though Lips in particular isn't willing to acknowledge failure prematurely. Currently, he has the unglamorous job of catering manager, while Reiner has a less definite career in the business end of entertainment. The film's first scenes reveal Lips' less glamorous life in gray Toronto, looking more like a past-rocker than anything else. And the frontman's infectious enthusiasm seems to be the emotional element that has bound the band together for so long.

But it becomes clear in short flashbacks that Anvil was never particularly good looking, and their home in Canada could only isolate them from success. Now, in their mid-50s, they can't boast the sex appeal of current bands—though snippets from live performances suggest that their live shows are still relatively strong.

Anvil's veteran status apparently doesn't count for much when it comes to the economics of rock. In their tour of Europe, supporting a self-produced and promoted thirteenth album, the crowd is so sparse that the promoter refuses to pay the band, leading to an enraged outburst (that still doesn't give them the money they're owed). At another gig, Anvil arrives two hours late leaving the band with only a couple dozen people in the audience. In one hopeful moment, Anvil has been invited to play at a huge metal festival in Japan, where the band enjoyed considerable success in their early career; when Anvil arrives, they discover that they've been scheduled for the early-afternoon show.

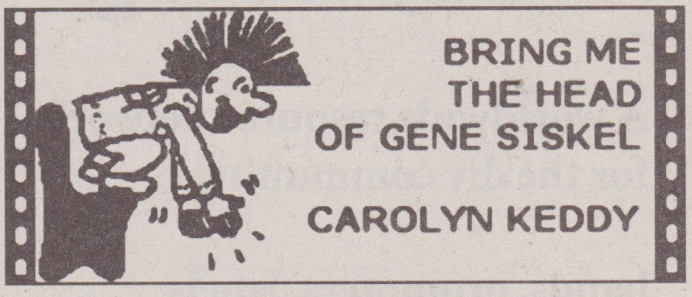
It may be a sign of their savvy as a modern rock act, or suggest a certain failure, but their most recent CD was marketed by internet only. And if you were to do a blind comparison of Anvil and their more successful competitors, it probably comes down to a basic combination of personality and sex appeal. It has never been purely a matter of the music—a lesson that the band comes to understand all too well as they beat the pavement in support of their album.

Lips was always the emotional powerhouse behind the music, and you get the feeling through the interviews that the vocalist loves, no, needs rock, and that his entire reason for being hinges on those few minutes in front of his audience. The band silently acknowledges that their time has long passed, but there's always that statistical hope that Anvil will pull glory from the fire.

The real drama comes close to the end of the documentary, when Robb decides to give up on the band's personal drama. The relationship between Lips and Robb becomes clearer—it's a friendship based on mutual need.

Film promotion for **Anvil! The Story of Anvil** revolves around the idea that the film is something like a real-life **The is Spinal Tap**, and to be honest, there's more than enough material here to support the notion of a dark comedy on heavy metal. Pitched the right way, just about any metal band has more than its share of unintentional comedy. The distinction here is that Anvil occupies a place in rock history, even if you don't care for their music. As a fan reminds us, Anvil is one of only a handful of bands that's managed to survive for over thirty years. Moreover, their story has more melancholy than out-and-out humor, with a lion's share of meditations over the passing of time and lost opportunities.

Director Gervasi is clearly a fan, but his film religiously avoids the pitfalls of making a fan piece. Finally, it's about some guys who just want to have fun, or at least try to as their rock careers refuse to die.



VICIOUS CIRCLE

I recently went to an Andy Warhol exhibit at San Francisco's De Young Museum. A large part of the exhibit consisted of photographs from Warhol's celebrity years. I noticed in a majority of the photographs there were one or more people who would be noted as "unidentified." You'd have a group of people such as Warhol, Liza Minelli, Mick Jagger, and "unidentified person." I couldn't help but think about this unknown person. How could it be that once you were hanging out with these people and now you are forgotten? Don't famous people only hang out with other famous people? Would it possible that if you recognize someone in a photograph the exhibitors would add the name? I doubt it. The worst one was seeing the Velvet Underground and Nico in the studio in LA and the photo lists three unidentified men who are sitting at the mixing board. These are the guys who probably recorded and mixed a really well known album and now no one remembers their names. They have no importance because Andy Warhol "produced" the record. It is really depressing. My boyfriend Michael points out that the whole thing bothers me

because I am worried that some day I might be the unidentified person. I don't really think that is true, but at least if that ever happens I will be dead so I won't notice it.

I was thinking about all this fame-versus-no-fame stuff because we had also seen **Anvil! The Story Of Anvil**. Anvil is a Canadian metal band who in 1984 toured with The Scorpions, Bon Jovi, and Whitesnake, all of whom went on to become well-known bands. The only band thats didn't was Anvil. Regardless of that set back the band has stayed together ever since, constantly releasing albums and playing shows. Their story should be an inspiration. It is in some ways, but in other ways it seems like a true version of Spinal Tap. Watching the story unfold it seems that the Spinal Tap guys had to know about Anvil. Then conversely the Anvil guys start channeling Spinal Tap. They even take a trip to Stonehenge while recording in England in 2006.

Anvil was formed in the '70s when singer/ guitarist Steve "Lips" Kudlow and drummer Robb Reiner began playing together. They released their first album in 1981. The film starts out with many metal stars such as Slash (Guns N Roses), Lemmy (Motörhead), and Lars Ulrich (Metallica) singing the praises and proclaiming the influence of Anvil. This introduces some early footage including a guitar solo played with a dildo. If you've seen **This Is Spinal Tap** it all looks strangely familiar. If you are like me and have never heard of Anvil, it seems like a set up. But it isn't.

Anvil! The Story Of Anvil focuses on the band before and during the recording their thirteenth album This Is Thirteen. The band members work average day jobs and have wives and families plus they are now in their 50s. Yet, still they hold on to the dream of becoming rock stars. They go on a European tour booked by a fan who has never booked a tour before. They miss trains and get ripped off by promoters. They get lost and are late for a show in the Czech Republic. But they do show up and play. Then the promoter refuses pay them because they were late. They do manage to play one big festival and Lips is like a kid meeting his idols. Hilariously Ted Nugent won't appear on camera and Lips continues to call for him. Nugent's probably intimidated.

Anvil returns to Canada with a surprisingly good attitude about the whole experience. Lips in particular realizes that they were lucky to even get to do a tour. They then start thinking about recording their next album. They get in contact with producer Chris Tsangarides who recorded their second album Metal On Metal. He agrees to record album number thirteen, but they need to raise a ridiculous amount of money to do so. The amount seems particularly outrageous when it is revealed that they seem to be recording at Tsangarides' home studio. After a bit of worrying about where to get the money Lips' sister lends it to them.

The members of Anvil are charming, but they seem too nice to be rock stars. At least the way I am conditioned to think of a rock star. Lips has a bad temper when provoked. He screams at the promoter in the Czech Republic and at Reiner. He gets mad about what has happened to the band, but then the next minute he is hugging Reiner. Lips' mostly upbeat attitude combined with all the crushing blows the band receives from touring, recording, and trying to get a major label to release the album, make it all the more uncomfortable when the next set back occurs. Will anything ever go right for these guys? (www.anvilthemovie.com)

I was thinking after seeing **Anvil! The Story Of Anvil** that one difference between punks and metalheads is that punks are much more serious in their attitudes and song topics. Anvil's lyrics are beyond silly, but they are also weirdly catchy. However I wasn't really thinking about jokey punk bands like NOFX. I never really got into NOFX and their ilk as a kid. I was more into East Coast stuff. The West Coast punk bands I was into were Black Flag and Flipper, maybe not exactly serious, but definitely cynical and nihilistic. What the hell kind of kid was I? So usually lighter pop punk bands like NOFX don't immediately come to mind when I am thinking about punk.

Yet, here I am watching **NOFX Backstage Passport**, the DVD of the Fuse TV show NOFX made of their 2006-07 worldwide tour. The show has all the reality TV elements. Most annoying is the overuse of talking head interviews to explain what happened at whatever time. Scenes get repeated ad infinitum. There is little actual footage of the band performing. The theme song performed by NOFX is so irritating. Leave it to NOFX to rhyme snort with passport.

The members of NOFX decide to do this tour because they are starting to hit forty and are unsure if they will ever be able to do it again. They all have mortgages, wives, kids, and responsibilities, so now is the time to throw caution to the wind. They plan a tour to places they have never played before and seem like they are willing to do anything to have the opportunity. They play shows in countries in South America, Asia, and Africa. It is a great idea particularly since they can obvious afford it and I am sure Fuse TV was chipping in too.

Having been on a tour myself, I know there is a lot of down time where nothing happens. Reality TV doesn't like downtime. It needs controversy. It is obvious the editors were trying. Kent the band manager gets drunk a few times and his antics are used for comic effect as well as controversy. After drinking all night on the train to Moscow, he is too hungover for sound check. Will the show go on? Fat Mike comes off as the whiner of the group. He complains that Melvin takes too long tuning his guitar at one show. Then there is no fan on stage in St. Petersburg, Russia. In Taiwan the crowd is too small. In Johannesburg they have to stay at a bed and breakfast that has jail-like bars on the doors. Then he comes around and realizes how interesting it is to be touring these places. The band appreciates the sites such as the Great Wall and petting baby leopards in South Africa.

I am sure fans will be interested in **NOFX Backstage Passport**. Watching a well-known band go on tour isn't that exciting to me. It's too easy. I prefer the desperation of unknown bands trying to make it on tour. Does anyone else remember the one reality show I really enjoyed **Bands On The Run**? It lasted only one season since apparently no one except me watched it. The bands competed by selling the most tickets and merch at their shows in different cities while on tour. Each band connived and plotted against the others. That is band reality TV to me. (www.fatwreck.com)

It is fun to see the behind the scenes of band life once in a while, but it can also get kind of dull. If you've seen one expose, then you've seen them all. After all it should really be just about the music. I really needed to simply see a band in its prime performing their songs. What an incredible surprise then to find waiting for me **Zero Boys Live At The Pizza Castle - 1981**.

I never saw Zero Boys back in the day, but I did go see them at 924 Gilman this past February. It was great. They sounded really good and were obviously having a great time. Just like they were in 1981.

Zero Boys Live At The Pizza Castle - 1981 captures the band just after they recorded the Vicious Circle album. They perform almost all of the songs from album except for "You Can Touch Me" and "Hightime" plus songs from the Livin' In The 80's EP. Singer Paul Mahern comments, "That's going to be on our album, it's gonna sound much faster and harder" after playing "New Generation" He also holds up a copy of the EP, trying to convince people to buy it for two dollars and a button for 75 cents. That sight alone should make all the record collectors cringe.

The band played two consecutive nights at the Pizza Castle. This video was recorded on the first night, October 2, 1981. The crowd is mostly subdued due to the restrictions of having an all-ages performance, which included having no permanent stage and no dancing. The crowd is seated during most of the performance, but occasionally one or two people will get up and start dancing with the band. On the last song, "Indianapolis," a bunch of people join in. Mahern jokes with the audience constantly. He mentions that a newspaper reports that the band has a really rowdy audience, but by the look of tonight's crowd "that is a pretty false statement." He also gets a little embarrassed when a girl yells out in the audience and he jokingly tries to wink at her.

Zero Boys Live At The Pizza Castle - 1981 is shot with one camera from the back of the room. The camera work is simple, but well done. There are no sudden zooms or too much extraneous camera movement. In this case that is what you want. The band provides all the action. The camera just records it. Mike Moser did double duty as cameraman and Pizza Castle booker. Moser also cleaned up the video for this DVD release as portrayed on the short, but informative DVD extra "The Process."

The band website lists the **Zero Boys Live At The Pizza Castle - 1981** DVD as a limited edition so don't wait. While you are there make sure you pick up the reissues of Vicious Circle and History Of as well. (www.zeroboys.net)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com.

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(BB) Brace Belden
(JU) Justin Briggs
(TB) Tim Brooks
(DB) Dan Butler
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97-SHIKI – "Brother" EP

This is the debut EP from this band of Chicago punk veterans (FOURTH ROTOR, V. REVERSE, etc.). It's safe to say there aren't many bands out there doing this kind of thing right now. A quirky, spastic combination of math-rock, jazzcore, post-punk, and probably some other sub-subgenres I can't think of right now. This type of technical songwriting is not easy, although it is easy to do it badly or to make something unlistenable. Luckily 97-SHIKI have avoided those potholes and managed to create music that is challenging and interesting while at the same time being catchy and memorable. If you were a fan of FOURTH ROTOR, this definitely picks up where they left off. Also, the packaging is very pretty indeed. (AM)
(He Who Corrupts Inc. / Static Station)

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY – "Smalltown Stories" CD

Good mid-tempo emo punk here along the ways of HOT WATER MUSIC and SAMIAM. Tuneful stuff from Australia with raspy vocals over many a guitar line. A throwback to the '90s that sounds pretty good now. (RL)
(Resist)

AGE / HELLSHOCK – split EP

Fucking A!! Just when you thought it was safe to go outside, fucking HELLSHOCK drops another salvo on you hapless fucks! It is hard to describe the sheer power of this band—with "Prisoner" HELLSHOCK has unleashed their strongest material to date. If you have been paying attention, you know that HELLSHOCK is the most ferocious band of this ilk. This EP takes the battle to a new level. You have never experienced rough-hewn vocals and guitar like this! HELLSHOCK are now masters of a very dark universe! On the flip side of this fine EP, the Japanese punk veterans AGE display a well-studied lead guitar and bass-drum attack. The tortured vocals weave and wend above the wide morass. This is classic Japanese punk that is sure to catch your ear. Get your copy of the HELLSHOCK / AGE split EP as soon as possible! You will be swept away! (BR)
(H:G Fact)

AGGRAVATION – "Pressure" EP

You gotta love the Frenchies… Super snotty '77 style punk with mangled English, just like you'd expect. HATEPINKS meets STARSHOOTER or something. This label is easy money; if I see the logo, I buy. It's simple, but it works. Get on it. (TB)
(P. Trash)

AGNOSTIC FRONT – "United and Strong: 1984 Demos" LP

What we have here is a bootleg of the *Raw Unleashed* CD that Grand Theft Audio did in the '90s minus the actual *United Blood* 7". You get a batch of pre-*United Blood* recordings, an '84 Don Fury studio rehearsal, a two-track mixdown of the 7", and the two tracks from *Message from the Underground* comp. I'm sure the OG tapes of this sound like shit but this sounds *horrible* and is probably mastered from the GTA CD. Dreadful treatment for some of the most crucial hardcore recordings ever. (JU)
(bootleg)

AIRES & GRACES – "What Happened to the Kids?" EP

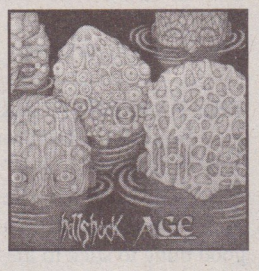
Top notch! Seriously, this band is the goods. You know when you have that one friend who doesn't like "street punk" stuff, but you try to convince them that they just haven't heard the *right* band? This is one of 'em! I'm talking about skillful melodic punk with raspy-yet-harmonic vocals, like early SWINGIN' UTTERS or the BELTONES. This EP is fantastic along those lines, and maybe I'd throw in a little bit of NAKED RAYGUN as a sound reference as well. Lots of "wooahs" to sing along to on this one, but it's not overkill, and the lyrics are excellent. Seriously, you need to check these guys out. Top ten this month for sure! (BG)
(Longshot)

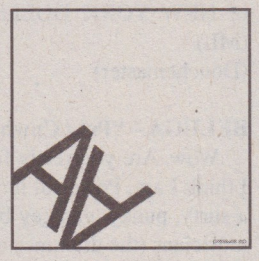
GG ALLIN – "Freaks, Faggots, Drunks, and Junkies" LP

Hey, the singer for OUT COLD plays on this record. If you have any interest in purchasing this, you probably already have it; if not, well, now you have the opportunity once again. The insert has fan art that is truly mind-blowing. (BB)
(MVD)

A MAN AND HIS STDS – "The Love Machine" CD

A modern-day TENPOLE TUDOR? Weird vocals and





pirate attire make this an easy call. Post-punk that isn't great, but certainly rocks just enough with primal playing and sing-along background vocals. Shades of early SIOUXSIE and THEATER OF HATE, too. Decent pirate punk from SoCal. (RL)
(Backdoor)

ATTENTAT SONORE – "De Stockholm Syndrome" LP

Here's some mid-paced punk with catchy gang back-ups and strong dynamic trading vocals. Kind of unremarkable, but solid songs that are well recorded with good energy. (AA)
(Maloka)

AURYN / BOSQUE – split EP

AURYN from Pittsburgh and BOSQUE from Chicago each give us one song. AURYN have a heavy dramatic anarchist hardcore sound that falls someplace between BURIAL YEAR and German metalcore bands from a few years ago. The song is an image of someplace after a war. The band includes former members of SEQUOIA, RAMBO, and PISSED JEANS, and I heard a tiny bit of RAMBO in their sound. BOSQUE have a similar sound and remind me a bit of ZANN. Good stuff from both bands. (MH)
(Square of Opposition)

THE BARRERACUDAS – "New York Honeys / Don't Get Me Wrong"

This is generic rock 'n' roll, but you know what? I like it! Why the fuck do some bands want to reinvent the wheel? Sometimes it's a good thing to stick to the tried-and-true formula of NEW YORK DOLLS-type rock 'n' roll!! (ML)
(Douchemaster)

BELUGA – "Pet / Cowboy Boots"

Wow. Are you ready for a riot grrrl revival? I think I am. Powerful female vocals backed by a surfy, punky, garagey band of mostly female musicians (the drummer is a guy). Singer Isabel Ibsen delivers the lyrics with force and a biting edge. The band compliments her with interesting melodies and layers of noise. It is loud, disorderly, and very fun. (CK)
(self-released)

BILL SHANKLY – "Hate World" EP

Ten-track EP of ripping old school hardcore. Equal nods here to the raw, simple approach of MINOR THREAT (especially the riffs, some of which are among the most blatant MINOR THREAT rips I've heard in years, and they *nailed* the guitar sound) and the decidedly more aggressive and negative approach of…well, NEGATIVE APPROACH. No lyrics, but the tongue-in-cheek attitude is clear with tracks like "Dwarves Not Midgets" and "Your Family's Shit," and then there's the totally serious photo collage. Perfect four-track recording—super raw and powerful, the way it should be. More quality hardcore from Australia. (WN)
(KOP / Instant)

BITE DOWN – "Doomsday Machine" EP

This killer Belgian band's debut release is more like a mini-album than a mere EP teaser, delivering nine solid tracks that relentlessly keep the energy high from beginning to end. The sound is an angry, unrefined approach to traditional hardcore, sort of like VIOLENT MINDS or OUT COLD. The lyrics are angry yet insightful, which is a common trait for bands on the awesome Crucial Response label. But don't let the label fool you into thinking this is shout-along posicore or anything, 'cause it ain't. This is simply just hardcore, and it's certainly worth checking out. (BG)
(Crucial Response)

BLANK DOGS – "Seconds" LP

So, I too was swept into the frenzy of the danse-noire bedroom-pop sounds of BLANK DOGS early on, but I must say, fourteen releases between 2007 and 2009, with *at least* one more release on the way, is *fucking excessive!* (JU)
(Captured Tracks)

BLESSURE GRAVE – "Learn to Love the Rope" LP

This is the second release from this San Diego duo and it's pretty fab. Mellow, pretty, dark, simple, and rockin' when it should rock. If you can image DEATH IN JUNE covering an indie rock band, it may sound like this. BLESSURE GRAVE do a rad job of covering "City Lights" by the SHADOW RING and anyone that would even consider covering the SHADOW RING must be fucked up in the best possible way. With upcoming releases on TMU, Sacred Bones, and Release the Bats, this band should be über-hip by the end of the year. Jump on the bandwagon early—it's worth it. (MU)
(Captured Tracks)

BONECRUSHER – "Our Nations Burning" 10"

Fuck yes! BONECRUSHER has been the top skinhead band in Southern California since 1993! The new Longshot Music *Our Nations Burning* 10" has taken the BONECRUSHER skinhead-rock machine to the highest level of excitement ever witnessed in the Western United States! This release fucking leaps off the turntable with the title cut. You get nailed right between the eyes with a brute-force blow to the head! Song number two on side A is another fucking powerful slice of American skin rock 'n' roll. "Under Suspicion" starts off strong and keeps building momentum from there! You will be singing along after the first chorus: "Under suspicion for a crime we didn't do / Under suspicion, they're watching you." Fucking great! Flip this 10" record over and you get two more excellent skinhead rock numbers! "Remember" recalls the youthful adventures of the neophyte skins and punks at age seventeen growing up to an even better perspective at an older age. BONECRUSHER sings: "These are the best years of our lives / We will remember them until the day we die!!" George plays some scorching guitar parts while Mike and Noah handle the vocal duties. This is another excellent BONECRUSHER song! The song "Last Man Standing" finishes off a fucking spectacular four-track skinhead slab. You lucky fucks need to order this! (BR)
(Longshot)

BOOM BOOM KID – "Benjui Jamboree" EP

This is an odd record, to say the least. BOOM BOOM KID is the solo project Nekro has been doing since his old band, FUN PEOPLE, broke up a few years ago. He has been consistently touring and releasing records with various backing bands for the last nine years, and from what I understand, in Argentina he's a total celebrity—like the equivalent of GREEN DAY or something. That's totally believable judging by his over-the-top stage performance. Shit is crazy. And as fun as his shows are, this record left a bit to be desired. It starts off strong with a melodic hardcore song that sounds like, for a lack of a better description, an ultra-poppy CODE OF HONOR. It was good and set the bar pretty high. The two songs after it on side A were middle-of-the-road pop songs—not bad, not great. Flip it over to side B and the first track is a CLASH-style reggae song, followed by an acoustic guitar song, both of which weren't very strong. It kills me not to give the record a gleaming review like I want to, but it's the truth. Instead of picking this up, track down the *Smiles from Chappanoland* LP, or any FUN PEOPLE recording. And when BOOM BOOM KID comes to town, go to the show. You'll have a blast. (FS)
(self-released)

BOTOX PARTY / ZHENIA GOLOV – split EP

I always enjoy when two bands with different sounds do a split together. Take, for example, BORN AGAINST and SCREECHING WEASEL—two bands with completely different musical styles on the same record. It's a great way to get different crowds into other types of punk. On this split, ZHENIA GOLOV starts it out with some fast hardcore with heavy mosh-inducing breakdowns—pretty straightforward as far as fast hardcore goes. Then BOTOX PARTY comes along with some by-the-numbers catchy punk. They'd fit perfectly on a split with any number of the better pop-punk bands around these days. (BD)
(Railroaded)

BURNING IMAGE – "Fantasma" CD

Originally disbanding in the late '80s,

Bakersfield California's BURNING IMAGE returns with a new record of classic-sounding death rock. While there is a certain garishness about the reunited BURNING IMAGE, it's clear that they take seriously and love the genr. Unlike some of their contemporaries and influences, BURNING IMAGE stays true to a classic punk / post-punk style of death rock, a style that was eclipsed by the advent of goth and industrial. Their early recordings are a rich document of the genre's earlier years and they stand out because of their excursions into hardcore—even if these excursions were more flirtations than anything else. Their hardcore leanings inevitably warrant comparison to *Dance With Me* / *Weathered Statues*-era TSOL, but the influence of CHRISTIAN DEATH, KILLING JOKE, X, THE GUN CLUB, and SPECIMEN can be heard clearly, interwoven to create some really enjoyable songs. *Fantasma* builds on this template of their earlier recordings, at least musically (no lyrics included). It has the same variety, with a hardcore-ish tune ("Mr. Dark"), GUN CLUB / FLESHEATERS-style tunes, essential nods to CHRISTIAN DEATH, and a measure of KILLING JOKE-inspired songwriting (especially "The Chosen One"). The vocals reference Patrick Mata, Rozz Williams, and Jack Grisham, but it's the occasional invocation of Jaz Coleman that excites me the most. Although BURNING IMAGE is comparable to the aforementioned bands, it's important to remember that they were more or less their peers. BURNING IMAGE manages to pull from these influences without being derivative of any one. They are a distinguished and essential piece of death rock history, and *Fantasma* only seems to build on this legacy. (DB)
(Alternative Tentacles)

BUTTHOLE SURFERS – "Brown Reason to Live" LP

Before I knew much about the BUTTHOLE SURFERS I thought of them as being akin to WEEN, the OG version of that self-referential and smug frat dude drug pop—not something I was that interested in investigating as a kid. It's actually more of a continuation of the mutant psychedelic Texas shit-bag / intellectual sound, a parody of the straight-laced hardcore mentality of the time, extending the idea of punk to its most distasteful conclusion. A fucked-up inversion of Americana, the circus freak-show morning-after detritus, spit up in the face of the clean living / hardworking Rollins mentality. You probably already know whether you need to get this reissue or not—the vinyl is heavy, sounds great at 69 RPM and so forth… Aesthetically, the *Brown Reason to Live* scrawled across the cover is not as pleasing as the starker art on the earlier issue of this record; wonder why they did that? (LG)
(Alternative Tentacles)

CANADIAN RIFLE – "Visibility Zero" LP

This record is a scorcher from beginning to end—ten songs of infectious Midwestern thrashy pop-punk. It has its highs and lows, but is a solid album all around. The opening track fucking rips! Sounds like they stole the riff straight off a DILLINGER FOUR record—no wait, it was GREEN DAY that did that. This one's just really good in the same way. The rest of the album goes in a different direction, sometimes getting slower and grungier for a song or two before jumping back into a fast one. On the whole, it's kind of similar to the new BANNER PILOT LP. It has that dark feel to it, like most of the songs were written while being holed up in Chicago basement in the dead of winter. Gets better on repeated listen, too. (FS)
(Residue)

CAPITAL – "Blind Faith" EP

These three songs are what remain of a split that that never happened with CRIME IN STEREO, and certainly would not have been in abstract territory had that release materialized. These guys play well polished melodic punk that, in spite of exploring consumerism and religion lyrically, really remind me of a mid-career version of PROPAGANDHI (whatever that may mean to you). They do a decent DAG NASTY cover, but all in all, these three songs were a bit too much for me. (RM)
(Iron Pier)

CAUSE CO-MOTION – "Because" EP

Six tracks all wrapped up in the 12" format…ah, the beautiful 12" and your long-forgotten boat race. Right, enuff! To the music, man, and don't spare the horses. Well, what we got here is a great platter of C86, Brit-pop loving, East Bay mop-top, shoe-shuffling, anorak-wearing, lovable dweebs. These boys have loaded up on their TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, PASTELS, POOH STICKS, WEDDING PRESENT, and BRILLANT CORNERS, and if they haven't, then they've very luckily stumbled across a genre that's very close to my heart. Minimal production—heavy on the echo, short on the distortion—adds to the retro vibe they've totally captured. I really do expect John Peel to interject with his soothing voice after each song (one can wish, can't one?). This is indie pop done to perfection and if CAUSE CO-MOTION keeps on putting out records of this quality, I will stalk them. Record of the month. (SD)
(Slumberland)

THE CENTERHITS – "City Girl Friend" EP

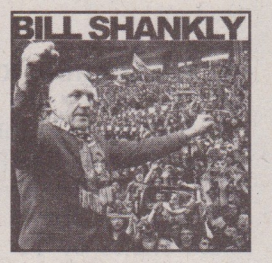
Holy smokes! I love the feeling of being totally blown away by a band I've never heard before. The CENTERHITS just became my new favorite pop band from Japan. Every song on this EP sounds just like *Kill the Dreamers Dream*-era FLESHIES. Short, fast, catchy, fucking brilliant. And the male / female vocals are perfectly delivered. Snuffy Smiles has yet to put out a bad record, and this is #111. (FS)
(Snuffy Smiles)

THE CENTERHITS / YOUR PEST BAND – split EP

If you're into pop punk at all, all I need to tell you is that this split is on Snuffy Smiles and you should know what you're getting into. This time around, we get YOUR PEST BAND who plays somewhat sloppy poppy punk, sounding like a less MISFITS-influenced BALZAC. The CENTERHITS are very similar, but a bit faster with male / female vocals to keep things interesting. Oh, I almost forgot to mention the awesome Japanese-to-English translations that are always entertaining. (BD)
(Snuffy Smiles)

THE CLASH – "Tribal Stomp" LP

So, just by the title alone, you already know that this is going to be a live bootleg of some sort. Here we get 13 songs from a live set at the Tribal Stomp Festival in Monterey, California in 1979. I usually don't dig live records, and this one is no exception. And I must say, while I am a fan of the CLASH, I am happy with their studio recordings



and don't know much about which live sets are considered their best. As far as live bootlegs go, the sound quality on this one is pretty awful. It sounds like someone had this tape sitting around in the sun for the last 30 years, then played it through a rotating speaker while re-recording it. This has got to be the most phased-out recording I've ever heard. Unless you are so nutty about the CLASH that you *need* every possible record bearing their name, skip it and get something you've been dying to hear instead. (BD)
(bootleg)

CHARLIE & THE MOONHEARTS / TEEN ANGER – split LP

I am not sure if I would have automatically compared CHARLIE & THE MOONHEARTS to TY SEGALL, but there it is in print on the cover, almost as large as the band name: "Recorded 8.10.08 by TY SEGALL at Wizard Mountain." It is hard to ignore, particularly since whoever recorded the TEEN ANGER side doesn't even warrant a mention in much smaller print. So there's my dilemma, 'cos CHARLIE & THE MOONHEARTS do sound a lot like TY SEGALL. Fuzzed-out, overblown surfy garage rock with heavily reverbed vocals. The songs don't seem as immediately catchy as TY's, but the choice of covering the ubiquitous "Tequila" is oddly interesting, particularly excluding the song's one vocal line. TEEN ANGER is a more straightforward garage punk band. The songs are faster with cleaner production and a bit more of a BILLY CHILDISH influence. (CK)
(Telephone Explosion)

CHERRY CHOKE – CD

This psych-ish, hard-rawkin' power trio's CD starts with a what sounds like a freakbeat demolition of "Along Came Mary," while many of the other songs sound like (mostly late-era) THE MOVE (though recorded not nearly as slickly, of course, and thankfully). They do a pretty decent approximation of *Master of Reality*-era SABBATH on "The Need," and end it all with a taste of ROBIN TROWER (they were probably emulating HENDRIX, but so was TROWER, after all). Not bad for this sort of thing. (DD)
(Elektrohasch Schallplatten)

CIRCUS BOY – "Are You for Real" CD

Four guitars, shout-outs to the MC5, a DEAD BOYS cover, and a ? AND THE MYSTERIANS cover, in place of covering the DEAD BOYS' cover of SYNDICATE OF SOUND. They couldn't make their thang more obvious if they had a mission statement on the back of the CD sleeve. You already know if you want to check it out, and thanks to MySpace, you very easily can, so why not form your own judgment? For the record, I do find it pretty funny (which might be the intended response) to hear so many guitars wailing away: takes me back to many a BLUE OYSTER CULT show (pre-*Spectres*, of course). (DD)
(self-released)

CRAPPY DRACULA / FARMS IN TROUBLE – split EP

CRAPPY DRACULA has potential and an awe-inspiring name, but unfortunately their music at times seems to end up like a *Seinfeld* joke dispossessed of its humor; i.e. "What's up with this song?" Mid-tempo punk that sounds good a third of the time. The first song on the FARMS IN TROUBLE side is really enjoyable. It's loose and disjointed with an almost UK DIY vibe and something similar to a TED LEO (but more folky or country) inflection in the sound. I almost want to toss out a GUIDED BY VOICES or BEAT HAPPENING reference. Good stuff. The rest of their side doesn't live up to the heights I presupposed while jamming on the first song, but on the whole it's pretty good. (P$)
(Dug Belan)

CROW / SEE YOU IN HELL – split EP

CROW, the man, has been incredibly prolific these days. New band KAIBOUSHITSU, a fairly new record for his psychedelic band DEATH COMES ALONG, and a handful of new CROW (the band) records! This release seemed to slip under the radar. One day I hear about it and a few days later I have it in my paws. CROW (the band) hails from Osaka, Japan, and while they began playing thrash that was recorded in a distinctly lo-fi method, they have since become more metallic in their riffs and recording methods. The two tracks here are very similar to the records released by Prank within the past few years. For SEE YOU IN HELL, while I've seen the name for years, this was the first I'd heard them. *Holy. Fucking. Hell.* Awesome and tight straightforward hardcore, with great guitar riffs and leads—will definitely check out their records next time I see them. To top it all, incredibly cool packaging: fold-out cover, great artwork, just *wow*...mandatory purchase here, folks! (VL)
(Insane Society)

THE CUSTOMS – "Really Long Gone" CD

Circa-'78 Cincinnati rawk and/or roll, featuring Peter Greenberg of DMZ / LYRES on lead axe. As far as I can tell, they only released a couple of singles, which are naturally included here, with the rest of the 20-odd tracks padded out with basement demos and live recordings, including a couple of SONICS covers. Feverishly performed garage punk by folk who were collecting rare 45s before you were born, son. Shake It is the independent label that released the original 7"s, and it's still going strong to this day. That's something to be proud of. (AM)
(Shake It)

THE DAMNED – "For My Fan Club" LP

A bootleg of a DAMNED show from 1986 with the band playing at the famous Town and Country Club in London. Sound quality is great and they do two of my favorite (post-original line-up) songs: "Love Song" and "Wait for the Blackout." Dave is belting them out, but by this point they have more in common with THE WEDDING PRESENT or DRAMARAMA than the summer of '77. (VL)
(bootleg)

DEAD GHOSTS / SMITH WESTERNS – split EP

The two bands on this 7" sound eerily similar. If I wasn't looking at the record label as it spins on my turntable, I could easily mistake them for the same band. An observation that I only point out because both songs sound unlike anything coming from any of the bands I have been hearing lately. Amazing and interesting reverb-drenched pop-garage songs. The music is turned up and the vocals are turned down to a whisper. It is the soundtrack to a dream. If David Lynch used '00s garage bands for his films, both of these bands would be on the top of his list. (CK)
(Bachelor)

DEAN DIRG – "Four Successive Blasts" LP

DEAN DIRG from Germany is here with a collection of four different EPs on one 12". This band seems to have slipped under the radar in the US, or was written off as a garage rock band, but they really have a fuck-you punk thing going on. Torch-to-your-ass punk rock with speed and snarl. Hopefully more folks will take note of what DEAN DIRG has been dishing out to this piece of shit world for a few years now. Check it out. (MS)
(P. Trash)

DEATHRAID – LP

The members of this band have a pretty impressive collective resume of bands in their past, but the music speaks for itself. That being said, these tunes do bear some similarities to (ahem) STATE OF FEAR. Essentially, this is energetic crust punk with very little post-Y2K melodicrust noodling, which is a refreshing change of pace compared to other bands in the genre. I fucking love the short, catchy leads. When they turn up the rock, as they do in "Hellbender" and "Eye of the Beholder," this shit is top-notch. Some of the lyrics are a little opaque, but primarily they involve the usual anti-humanity, anti-consumerism themes one would expect. This is a good LP for sure, but don't miss them if they come through your town because the live show is even better. (AU)
(Black Water)

DESKONOCIDOS – "Problemas" EP

This is one great record; I've played it so

many times and with each listen I crank up the volume in an attempt to soak it all up. I think lo-fi-ness of the recording and all the pops and snaps add to the character and make it all the better. There is this underlying darkness—an uneasy, macabre feeling, almost haunted—yet it's so catchy and poppy it's as if the record grabs you and forces you to dance and it all feels very personal and honest. Pure heart on this one. Highly recommended and it features cover art by the artist Elías Martínez de Rises. (RR)
(Lengua Armada)

DETOURNEMENT – "Screaming Response" EP

Screaming Response is a surprisingly decent release considering most of the members hail from other, more polished bands like BIGWIG and ENSIGN. This eight-song EP sounds pretty polished at times, too, which I'm never a big fan of, but the energy and cool political lyrics make up for it. The influences range from RANCID to LEATHERFACE, but they definitely try to mix things up a little bit and essentially create their own sound. The cover is a neat grip-tape job, and you get an illustrated lyric booklet to boot. Pretty good overall, but this will appeal mostly to those who have a strong tolerance for cleaner, more accessible hardcore / punk sounds (and thus are likely not even reading this fine magazine right now). (BG)
(Chunksaah / Pirates Press)

DRÖMDEAD – "Donde Esta Du Dios?" EP

Holy fucking shit—these kids, from Venezuela of all places, have released a near-perfect early-'80s Scandinavian hardcore EP. Seriously, if you played this for me without telling me what it was, I would have totally guessed it was a long-lost Propaganda or Rock-O-Rama release. The main vibe here is a TAMPERE SS / CHAOS UK mid-tempo burn that relies more on atmosphere than speed to establish its viciousness. Which isn't to say that they don't pick up the tempo at all, "Nazis = Merda" is an outstanding short blast, and the title track is a speedy DISCHARGE-influenced rager. They cap off the record with a ripping KAAOS cover. If you happen to run across this in a distro bin, don't let the gore-grind-ish cover throw you off. This is a fucking keeper for sure. (AU)
(Moo Cow)

DUM DUM GIRLS – "Catholicked" 12"

The female version of the BLANK DOGS? Desperate melancholy one-girl-in-her-bedroom pop with self-conscious JESUS AND MARY CHAIN, SHOP ASSISTANTS, FLATMATES, and DOLLY MIXTURE inflections. The songs that work are pretty perfect darkly fuzzed-out pop confections, but something about this seems so staged and constructed… But if the idea of a girl with a cool voice singing JAMC-style doomed lullabies is up yer street, here's your soundtrack… (LG)
(Captured Tracks)

EASY ACTION – "She Ain't My Girlfriend / Elo Kiddies"

Two new songs, one of which is a cover, from the John Brannon (ex-NEGATIVE APPROACH) fronted EASY ACTION. Their track is even *more* rocking than usual and brings to mind the slower songs of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT. B-side is a cover of the CHEAP TRICK tune, and Brannon and the band sound maniacal singing the respective Rick Nielsen parts and backups. (VL)
(Shake It)

EATING MACHINE – EP

Raw, slow, noisy hardcore bordering on grindcore with bursts of speed and chaos. Multiple vocalists or vocal sounds and slow, grinding parts that change into near-grindcore sound, a little like SIEGE. I love two-person bands that create lots of chaos. Is the same guy doing those quick call-and-response scream / growls? Good stuff from Florida. (MH)
(Timewarp)

EAT SKULL – "Wild and Inside" LP

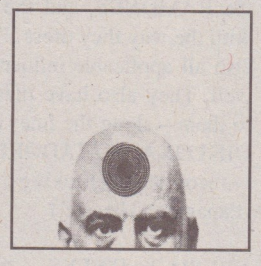
Shambolic four-track dream-pop from ex-HOSPITALS orderlies. The actual pop numbers (which resemble the BEACH BOYS covered by PAVEMENT on Adderall instead of ludes) are interspersed with more experimental soundscape ballads, like TOM WAITS alone on a desert island with nothing but a tone-bent Speak-n-Spell. They even throw in a hardcore number that could be a lost DIE KREUZEN *Cows and Beer* track. The whole thing is drenched in fuzz and reverb. For some reason the combination of all of the above is making me nostalgic for ARCHERS OF LOAF. This is the type of record we don't often see around the *MRR* review bin, but I recommend checking it out. (AM)
(Siltbreeze)

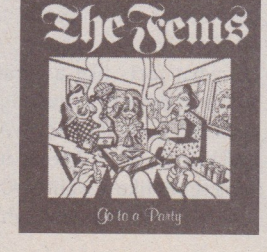
ELEKTROLUX – "All Sham!" LP

This has got an old-school feel to it. It reminds me of a time when there was a very blurry line that separated new wave and punk. The blurry part, at least for me, was the "artsy" factor. The more artsy you were, the more new wave or industrial you were. (Yes, I realize that most everybody will take issue with this.) At any rate, this has got a sort of industrial, artsy, new wave feel to it, without at all giving up its punkness. Don't get me wrong—I like the hardcore and power-pop and all that, but I also like to hear a record once in a while that doesn't sound like everything else out there. This record satisfies that need for me right now. Good shit. (KK)
(Jojo)

F – "You Are an EP / Mess You Up" LP

Florida's F is such a weird band(s). Soon after forming in the early '80s, they split into two separate groups, one playing hardcore punk and the other hard rock. The confusing thing is that the two both played the same songs—in their respective styles, of course. Then there was the '90s Florida band that, although completely unrelated to either of the "original" Fs, put out a 7" under the name "F." Anyway… This reissue is a 50/50 proposition. On one side is F's (the hardcore one, that is) 1983 classic *You Are an EP*—six tracks of ripping USHC with a vocalist who spews the lyrics to songs with amusingly ironic straight edge themes ("No," "In Control," "Spit It Out") in a great voice-cracking delivery. There's also a 1984 track in the same vein that originally appeared on a *Flipside* comp. The rest of the material—a 1985 song from their split LP with WHITE FLAG, 1987's *Mess You Up* EP, and a track from their 1988 *Burn the World into Ashes* LP (that I've never even *heard* of before)—is just boring with too much rock influence. The voice-cracking screaming had disappeared





by the mid-'80s, I guess. Too bad! Worth picking up to get the early shit on vinyl, though—if you can find one of the 333 copies. (CS)
(Puke 'n' Vomit)

THE FEMS – "Go to a Party" EP

Another hit from Drag City?? Those blundering blobs have reissued DEATH, MAYO THOMPSON, and a few other great things I can't remember, and now this? A helluva lot better than that ROYAL TRUX crap. This is great plodding punk that's like a scary ANGRY SAMOANS. Funny, menacing, great, 1982 Buffalo. Everything I've found on the FEMS says it's hardcore, but it's one-riff almost-drone great. Don't let "drone" confuse you though; this is punk, and this is great. (BB)
(Drag City)

FEVER B / GENTLEMEN JESSIE & HIS MEN – split EP

In timely fashion we are now reviewing this seasonal 7" complete with Christmas tree on the cover… I'm assuming this was released for last year, but I can get seasonal in June. No need to say too much about GENTLEMEN JESSE's track "Christmas Hangover"—as always spot-on late '70s power pop with fantastic hooks, plus the line "I'll be getting over my hangover on Christmas morn / That's the way I celebrate the day Jesus was born." Now that's poetry!! FEVER B is sugary as fuck, maybe too much? I dunno, I'm feeling it, though. Not a fan of "theme" records, but this rules!! I'm sure it's long-gone…but try your luck. (TB)
(Die Slaughterhaus)

THE FIALKY – "Sance" CD

Unfortunately I can't really tell you anything about this band's history at all because they are from the Czech Republic and everything on the CD and their website is in Czech. What I can tell you is that these guys rock! By the looks of them, they are cross between the CLASH, the RAMONES, and the TOY DOLLS, what with the way they dress. I'm sure that those are also all applicable influences in their sound as well. They also have that European punk feel to them—along the lines of PUBLIC TOYS or DIE LOKALMATADORE, for example. I highly recommend checking this band out!! (ML)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

FRESH & ONLYS – "I'll Tell You Everything / I Saw You Seeing Me"

You get an overall poppiness, but the guitars are far too distorted to be jangly. Echoey vocals—hell, echoey *everything*—and… eh, what feels like a great nonchalance in the whole approach to making music. The FRESH & ONLYS, NODZZZ, WAVVES, the VIVIAN GIRLS…I don't know, it all just smacks of something like a weird '90s college / indie rock revival. Once was enough, thanks. I'd file this in the "Safe Music for the Milquetoast Crowd" section of your record collection. Hand-stamped labels with no song titles. (IS)
(Dirty Knobby)

F.U.A.L – "Fuck Up And Live" CD

Had this little puppy on glorious vinyl before I decided to part with my third limb to finance a live of sex, drugs, and sausage rolls…ah well. Anyways, many a night was spent curled up in a cider-induced ball, semi-unconscious on a floor of one of the many dogshit-ridden squats in Belfast's inappropriately named Holylands whilst having this blasted down my eardrum. And by god, it was worth it. F.U.A.L. mixed the melody of the JOYCE MCKINNEY EXPERIENCE, the no-compromise political stance of CRASS, and the driving punk of ANGELIC UPSTARTS. The musicianship is top notch—King Petesy the Veggie-Burger being one of the bestest bass noodlers to grace the scene, gladly backed up by the Ginger Baker of all that is punk, Crispo the Mexican Rasta. Here you got the LP, which was originally released in 1990, as well as the '89 demo tracks. More than a trip down memory lane, still standing true and strong in these apolitical times. Another notch for Belfast punk. (SD)
(Boss Tuneage)

FUTURE LOVERS / THE PEGGY SUES – split EP

Judging by the posturing in the band photo, the FUTURE LOVERS' name is inadvertently ironic, at the very least wishful thinking. They recorded a couple SCREACHING WEASEL or TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET knockoff-style jams that aren't totally enthralling. On the flip, the PEGGY SUES' first track is an alternative/bar-rock hybrid. The second, "Freakout," is like a song that a faux-punk band on a pre-teen sitcom would play that somehow ends up being accidentally awesome. It's horrible in many ways, but in other more important and more difficult to describe ways, it's really good. The lyrics are bad at times, the music isn't innovative, but on some level it all comes together. It's inexplicable. If there had been an ill-fated, poorly written battle of the bands scene in *Desperate Teenage Lovedolls*, this song could have fit into it somehow. Some moments are good, some are bad, some are good and bad—hybrid moments. This review may lead to some sort of walk of shame moment, but I could care less, I'm way into "Freakout." It sounds like a bar punk band trying to write a JOY DIVISION-style song with some sort of '50s diner vibe—with ANDREW WK doing co-production. (P$)
(Wee Rock)

GERM ATTAK – "They Live, We Sleep" CD

A fourteen-track resurrection of straightforward, stripped-down UK82 punk. This Canadian trio do this style superbly and are faithful to the letter, with scalding EXPLOITED-ish vocals, but this has always been the most yawn-inducing style to me. Groundbreaking in its influence and impact, (DISORDER, CHAOS UK) but superseded and perfected a few years later by Japanese and Scandinavian bands that took the sound to new levels of extremity (see SWANKYS, OUTO, RIISTETYT). So personally, throwing back to the basic 1-2 isn't really that interesting, unless a 40oz is in my hand and the band is right in front of me in a basement. At the same time, I credit GERM ATTAK for keeping this, from the lyrics to the music itself, pretty fun and fresh. It seems more of a continuation, homage, and personal expression than a stale re-enactment, and is ace in that regard. And most likely, if you love UK82 and you've spiked your hair and studded your jacket, as the lyric sheet suggests you do—move the furniture, as you'll be pogo ready as soon as this CD starts. (KS)
(MCR)

THE GIMMIES – "Roll Up" CD

Great rock and roll garage-y punk from the land of the rising sun. It's frantic without being messy, loud without being distorted, and tight while still being lose. Sounds like a girl I once knew. The hooks are here, folks, the choruses in full effect, and the sing-alongs are meter-hitting red. If you dig the sound of Detroit past and present, some ol' school garage like the SCIENTISTS or the LIME SPIDERS, and that sleaze-loving Rip Off Records sound, then go get this. Loving this one. (SD)
(Off the Hip)

GLEAM GARDEN / THE TIM VERSION – split EP

GLEAM GARDEN is a great upbeat hybrid of DILLINGER 4, JAWBREAKER, and LEATHERFACE, and this rough recording suits them fine. Fast and furious enough for me, yet catchy too. THE TIM VERSION have been around for a while; they have an old Gainesville style that's upbeat and raw. They sound better here than I remember them, and they do a very nice J CHURCH cover ("November") that makes me feel kind of warm and fuzzy inside… yet sad. (AD)
(Snuffy Smiles)

THE GRANDPRIXX – "Prixxology 1998-2001" CD

A collection from this Boston-area band in the SCREECHING WEASEL / QUEERS vein; these guys don't really stand out, looking back, but I'm sure fans of this band, as well as completists of this crowded genre will appreciate the practicality of this 42-song collection. (RL)
(Cheapskate)

GRASS WIDOW – LP

Whenever I hear music with a cacophony of female voices, I always get really excited—it sounds like the aural manifestation of grrrl com-

munity to me, you know? The first time I saw these kids was at a NEW BLOODS show and it fucking blew my mind. Post-punk pop harmonies, guitars and basses weaving in and out, the thrill and exhaustion of life. You know, RAINCOATS, KLEENEX… just pay attention, it's good. (MM)
(Make a Mess)

GUNFIRE! GETDOWN! – "Songs for Trash" CD

I don't know if it's the backdrop of decaying industrial blight or what, but Cleveland sure as heck produces some loud, ugly bands! These particular derelicts have a sound that falls somewhere between sloppy, drunken garage rock 'n' roll and the screaming, distorted Cleveland hardcore sound that we've all come to love over the years. I imagine these dudes starting off in the hardcore scene while still wet behind the ears, and then they discovered the sleazy world of dive bars, cheap booze, and a wasted life. Yes, you've probably been down that road, too, so you can relate. This is one of those bands that will sound better blasting through the speakers at a raucous, out-of-control party right before the cops show up and someone gets arrested. Ten tracks on this disc, with titles like "Barroom Showdown," "Empty Piles," and "Girl Pile," and they all rock at the highest energy level. There was no lyric sheet included with this thing, but with title tracks like those just listed, I don't really think one is really necessary. Get down! (BG)
(State of Intoxication)

HANDSOME DEVILLE – "Greatest Hits" CD

Slick pop punk along the ways of SMOKING POPES and FALLOUT BOY. The vocal heavy mix doesn't help the lack of energy or weak tunes here. Keep practicing and start over from scratch, boys. (RL)
(Zombie Dog)

HARD-ONS – "Suck and Swallow: 25 Years 25 Songs" CD

As you can guess from the title, *Suck and Swallow* collects 25 tracks from the first quarter-century of these veteran Aussie pricks' existence. The HARD-ONS employ a variety of styles over the course of this CD, including straight RAMONES worship, crossover / thrash, melodic hardcore, pop punk, pop, and alt-rock. Judging by the lyrics, their preoccupation with girl parts lasted about a decade, after which their hormones cooled down and they started writing somewhat less explicit songs. This was actually the first time I've ever sat down and listened to these guys... Outside of a few exceptions, I prefer music with a bit more depth than your average *South Park* episode (what a snob, huh?), but the combination of buzzsaw melodies and youthful exuberance on the early tracks was hard to deny. I found the later stuff (i.e. the majority of the CD) more hit-or-miss. I suppose it's is a cool disc for HARD-ONS fanatics, or a good overview for someone curious about the band. (CS)
(Boss Tuneage)

HATED NOISE – "I Don't Want to Be Like You" EP

These miscreants from Seattle are punk as fuck! HATED NOISE put the nastiness in the music as ingredient number one! On the first song on the first side, HATED NOISE sets the tone for the entire EP. "Hatred and Violence" comes slamming into the melee, with a face full of drugs and alcohol and a shit-load of momentum! We churn through the melodic "Officer Friendly" and arrive at the title cut "I Don't Want to Be Like You." This barnburner has an introduction by that punk icon El Duce from the MENTORS. HATED NOISE has many strong opinions and they serve them up with lots of vim and vigor! Side two begins with "I'm Anti" and segues into another version of "Officer Friendly" followed by "Child Molester." Song number seven is "I Got the Gout Too." HATED NOISE is not offering any new sounds for you punks. HATED NOISE is taking a well-known formula steeped in beer and bile and rubbing you raw with it!! (BR)
(self-released)

THE HATEPINKS – "Sick Cake" LP

Euro-trash punk rock at it's best! LES HATEPINKS are hands-down the French version of the STITCHES!! What more do I need to say? Hollywood meet Paris. Snotty, self-indulgent rock 'n' roll inspired by the '70s abound on this must-have, six-track 12" EP from P. Trash Records!! (ML)
(P. Trash)

HATRED SURGE – "Isolated Human" EP

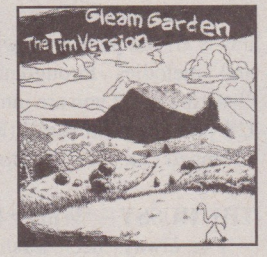
Painkiller is by far one of my favorite labels to watch and buy from. Between their distro and proper releases, they have a lot of killer music to offer, and they continue to strengthen their ranks with the *Isolated Human* EP. The sound is a bit of a deviation from what I remember of this group. Here, HATRED SURGE comes across much more coherently than their previous stuff—a little less grindy, yet still brutal, strong and threatening. The dual vocals are certainly a plus, the male / female execution is flawless, and the pace and intensity vary at will. At times I hear some '90s LA-violence, the kind that backs you into a corner and berates you with lines like "Everything is temporary / Only death is certain," and all the while the band keeps their signature very legible all over this slab. The omnipresent anxiety and buzzsaw guitar work make the new six-song release a definite winner. Not to overdo the reference, but I get a huge DESPISE YOU feel through and through. MIND ERASER and BREATHING FIRE fans take notice! (RM)
(Painkiller)

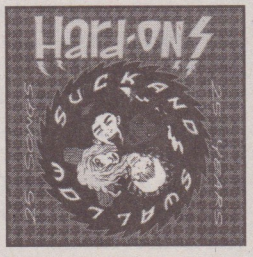
HAT TRICKERS – "The Shadow" CD

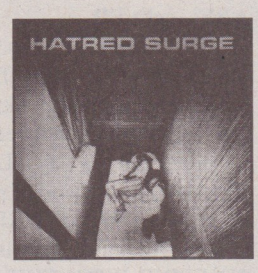
The main portion of this CD from Japan's HAT TRICKERS is a bit hard to describe. They are droog-punks along the lines of the ADDICTS or MAJOR ACCIDENT, but have elements of melodic hardcore and even psychobilly punk at times. And throughout the first part of the disc, they have this eerie, haunting violin that lends a strange feel to the songs. The bonus tracks are where this band really begins to work for me. They do a solid cover of the excellent song "Breaking Out" as performed by OSCAR DRILL AND THE BITS in the movie *Shock Treatment*. For this track alone I would give the CD a positive review (while it also breaks my heart 'cuz it is a cover song I had always wanted to record). They then close out this eight-song disc with a pounding street-punk original called "Clockwork Soldiers." Good stuff. (RK)
(Friday Night Kids)

HEARTBREAK STEREO – "Inspiration (Back from the Dead)" CD

Wait… is it 1999?? Do I have a full mane of hair







again?? Oh no, it's 2009 and I'm old and bald, but this band is a time-warp to the early days of the DROPKICK MURPHYS and RANCID, when the term "street-punk" wasn't a dirty word. The guys in the band look about twelve, and to be honest their racket is just fine. But it's just a decade too late. For the fans of the genre? This ain't no slouch. (TB)
(self-released)

HOMEBREW – "The Heart of Insurrection" CD

Wow! I have to give these guys credit for longevity! I came across a DIY demo CD from HOMEBREW a long time ago, and now here is a proper release by them after all these years. Sure enough, after a quick search on MySpace, I see that they formed in 1995, so props to them for slogging it out for well over a decade. As for the music, it ranges quite a gamut from hardcore-tinged punk to more melodic street-punk. With staccato-like hard-hitting drums, rumbling bass lines, and buzzsaw guitar grinding away, this is all-out punk rock with some catchy leads and melodies throughout. Definitely worth checking out if you are into '80s US hardcore or UK punk rock for sure!! (ML)
(Bombed Out / X Fist / Boss Tuneage)

THE HUSSY – "Winter Daze" EP

I've always been a fan of two-piece bands, starting years and years ago with a German duo called ABSTURZENDE BRIEFTAUBEN. This one is no exception to that rule. They are catchy and upbeat, which I always like. They're also raw and very lo-fi, which I also happen to like. The fact that they have the male / female competing vocals just seals the deal, I am not kidding you. From Madison, Wisconsin, this is the shit. One of two records (their first) they sent us to review this month. (KK)
(A Fistful of Records)

THE HUSSY / SLEEPING WITH THE AVIARY – split EP

The HUSSY side has the raucous boy-girl-revolution vocal tradeoff of HUGGY BEAR, but through a proto-punk STOOGES filter. It's raw and sloppy, with really dumb lyrics, but it's pretty fun anyway. SLEEPING WITH THE AVIARY is a dynamo of power-pop hooks with more than a hint of PIXIES influence floating around. All in all, this is a decent split, with SLEEPING WITH THE AVIARY just slightly coming out on top. (AM)
(Science of Sound)

IAN & THE AZTECS – "Beer Whiskey Tequila Wine / Ain't That Loving You, Baby"

Real fine fratty garage with some crazy string-bending from Eddie Angel. B-side is not the umpteenth version of the JIMMY REED classic (which should have been retired from the pool of coverable songs after LINK WRAY's version, let's face it), but a breakneck version of the ELVIS / IVORY JOE HUNTER song, making this well worth having in your collection. (DD)
(Carlton)

THE ICEMEN – "The Iceman / It'll Be Your Grave"

Here we have an unearthed piece of NYHC history for you rats. The ICEMEN was a band that existed in a few different forms and played many of the crucial NYC hardcore shows in the mid-'80s and the earlier days of the '90s. This early incarnation features Mackie Jayson, of CRO-MAGS fame, on drums. These two tracks were culled from tapes recorded at Nola studios in '84 and '85. The A-side, "The Iceman," definitely has a MOTÖRHEAD thing going on, but the flip, "It'll Be Your Grave," is *sick*. It's just one fairly simple, tuff-as-*hell* (but not moshy) riff repeated four times, and if it came out today, kids would kill each other to it. Totally worth the ticket price for the B-side alone, and that's only 'cause I can't really hang with Lemmy and Co. (JU)
(Reaper)

IDLE HANDS – "Postponed" LP

Herky-jerky poppy punk rock played by some Germans that come from a hardcore background (judging from their NECROS and FAITH shirts). I can hear some definite SPITS, MARKED MEN, and DILLINGER FOUR influences, and while I realize that I'm throwing some heavyweight names around, I have to say that for the most part, IDLE HANDS is doing the style justice. The songs are good and take heed of the time-honored foot-tapping-head-bobbing continuum. The track sequencing is a bit lopsided as I enjoyed the A-side a great deal more than the flip…the B-side has too many meandering moments and the vocals sound a bit whinier. At any rate, I already know many of the A-side tunes are gonna be stuck in my head for days. I'm gonna be singing "Vacant Stare" to the corner store dude and then I'm gonna have to let him know that it's nothing personal, I just got a song stuck in my head. What's surprising about all of this is my general dislike for pop punk. IDLE HANDS defied the odds big-time and wrote some pop punk with crossover appeal, and if *Postponed* was a one-sided LP, it would be pretty close to flawless. (CI)
(Hardware)

IMPOSTERS – "The Time Has Come" LP

This LP has got way less of an early '80s SoCal hardcore vibe than their first EP, *Pool Maintenance*, but it's still pretty tight. It starts off with a surfy guitar feel and delves into more melodic parts as the record progresses. At certain points, the bass and drums are mixed so high over staccato guitar that the music reminds me of the MINUTEMEN. This is a more surf-punk version of the EP, but with the same early Boston-style angsty vocals. With lyrics about suburban development and fun in Frisco, it has less of a skate theme than the EP did, but there is so much going on in these songs, it's pretty impressive and I'm totally down. (DA)
(Secret)

IN DESPERATION – "Ghost Town, America" EP

Quite a peculiar mix of TRAGEDY style and heavy, clean-cut hardcore here. Maybe I'm just saying that 'cause I can't tell what angle they are coming from? Whatever it is, it's heavy, melodic, and pretty slick, with one of those "singing" chorus parts in the first song. Decent for what it is. (JU)
(Slambo Rat)

INDIREKT – "Total War Path" 2xCD

This here double-disc is a collection of everything this female-fronted Dutch hardcore band recorded in the studio between 1983-1987, a live set from '87, and a "bonus" studio sesh from 2006. Everything here is good but the middle period records are my favorites—'85's *Op Oorlogspad* LP and '86's *Nacht und Nebel* 7"—they show the band at a much tighter and darker place than the earlier ones. All the material here, for those unfamiliar, is fairly typical melodic '80s European hardcore with killer lady vocals that really pushed INDIREKT out of the norm. The vocal patterns on those mid-period records I mentioned before are perfect, just perfect. (JU)
(Grand Theft Audio)

THE INSULTS – "Thrasher Go Home" EP

Stop-and-go hardcore from Muskegon, Michigan. This was originally released in 1985, and I remember getting it when it came out and thinking it was fucking awesome. Listening to it 24 years later I am not so sure if the INSULTS hold up. I would not call this classic, but for the time it was cool and obscure. I know this started fetching big dollars in the collector market, so it is good to see it back and available. (MS)
(Punks Before Profits)

JACK-O & THE TENNESSEE TEARJERKERS – "The Disco Outlaw" CD

I love this album. It's inexplicable, since I am sure I was born a punk. I hate the '70s, Southern rock, LYNYRD SKYNYRD, and SANTANA. I like the SEEDS and if a boogie-woogie piano player were exceptionally good looking I would thoroughly enjoy staring at him over my drink. JACK-O & THE TENNESSEE TEARJERKERS combine all these seemingly contrary and off-putting elements into one amazing record. Garage rock with a Southern hillbilly tinge. Great songwriting dripping with honesty and humor. Namedropping Shylock in the song "Crook for Your Look" makes me laugh each time I hear it. Plus Jack has one of those amazing voices. It

is sweet, hot, lascivious, desperate, and aching. I could listen to it all day. This is sleazy, gritty garage blues with a romantic side. It drives me wild. My favorite track is "Sweet Thang." It is so catchy and ardent, almost impossible to believe anyone would not be instantly charmed by Jack or any of the TEARJERKERS. I may be slightly biased since the OBLIVIANS are one of my all-time favorite bands, but in this case I don't think so. This record stands apart. (CK)
(Goner)

JAIL – "There's No Sky (Oh My My)" LP

Put this on and resign yourself to good times. It's ridiculously good, like a punker DEADLY SNAKES. There's something about this that appeals to me in the same way REIGNING SOUND and some of the better GOODNIGHT LOVING songs do. The hooks don't end, the melodies are penetratingly brilliant… I'm way into it. Might be the best record I've heard so far this month. (P$)
(self-released)

JOY DIVISION – "Manchester, So Much to Answer For" LP

JOY DIVISION bootlegs are hit-or-miss, but this one seems good even from looking at the sleeve. There're no live tracks (as I've said before, there are two officially released live JOY DIVISION albums that beat the pants off most of the live boots floating around, and are available on vinyl and CD)—this is all demos and radio sessions. The first two tracks are from the *Unknown Pleasures* LP session, which are available complete on other boots and worth getting, as they have a much rougher edge than the release. Five tracks from the "Genetic Demos" session follows, and again the quality is good and the songs have a nice raw and urgent feel. The B-side is made up of the Piccadilly Radio (Manchester) session from June '79 and two tracks from their December John Peel session of that year. The Piccadilly one is worth the price of admission alone and includes a version of "Atmosphere" entitled "Chance," which of course is the highlight of the record. Since JOY DIVISION was a band whose creative output was cut tragically short, they are one of the few groups whose demos and outtakes are worth finding, and this record is a nice collection of excerpts from sessions that are all around on other boots, and worth tracking down. I'm still looking for a studio recording of "Ceremony" though… (AD)
(Interzone)

KAROSHI – "Paradise Lost" EP

The Nashville crust / hardcore scene is pretty productive right now, what with SANCTIONS, DAWN, and now KAROSHI. Of course, all the bands share some members, much like the Memphis scene of the mid-'90s; maybe they're taking a page from their punk forefathers, as it were. Whatever their influences, they're doing something right in Nashville, because this 7" is a killer. This is some seriously crushing hardcore in the crustier vein, with beautiful melodic parts interspersed with harsh, screaming angst. It doesn't sound too similar, but this gives the same feeling as SCHIFOSI, GREYSKULL, or later CATHARSIS. Lyrics are poetic and yet pretty straightforward, with a strong eco-anarchist message. Very, very good. They should put out a split 7" with PROTESTANT, that would be an absolutely perfect pairing. (VX)
(Anti-Corporate Music, Inc. / Meat Cube)

KEEP IT CLEAR – "On Our Own" EP

Well, with a name like KEEP IT CLEAR, what do you really expect this to sound like? That's right—modern youth crew hardcore! Though it's really well done, if you're into the style, you already know whether or not you need this. I repeat: the execution is really good. (JU)
(self-released)

LICKGOLDENSKY – "Demo" EP

After two and a half weeks spent chasing the ghost of '90s hardcore at several shows in different parts of the country (yes, TRIAL and THREADBARE were fucking amazing), I arrived today at the *MRR* house to find this in the review box, a 7" release of a quintessentially '90s demo. LICKGOLDENSKY (awful, awful name) were a chaotic and heavy hardcore band much in the vein pioneered by COALESCE and CONVERGE. This isn't bad at all, and I actually like it more than their later material. It reminds me a bit of BURN IT DOWN, which can only be a good thing. If you were going to buy this you probably already know, but it's limited to 300 copies total (on pink, black, and gold vinyl) so you might want to hurry. (VX)
(Square of Opposition)

LIFE – "When the Peace Collapses" EP

The band's demo from 1994 committed to vinyl. Heavy Japanese crusty hardcore, distorted and blown out as all hell. LIFE started shortly after the more famous GLOOM, and while similar in style, had a more political bent. Definite precursors to the current distorted D-beat sound that is emulated around the world. Check it out if you can! (VL)
(In Crust We Thrash)

LIKE RATS – "Survival Seeds" EP

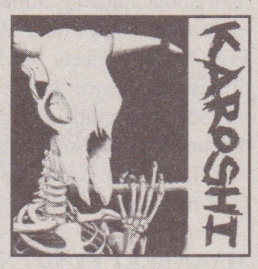
Since the early '80s fast hardcore thing has (sadly) been done to death, there seems to be a revival of sorts dedicated to the bare bones-mid tempo hardcore thing that was prevalent in the mid-'80s, and LIKE RATS pulls it off well, thankfully without sounding generic. Maybe it's because the influence draws a little bit from crust as well. The lyrics are sort of political, but more abstract and intelligent than your standard fare. If you dig bands like ECONOCHRIST and the PEDESTRIANS, then this just might be your bag. (BG)
(self-released)

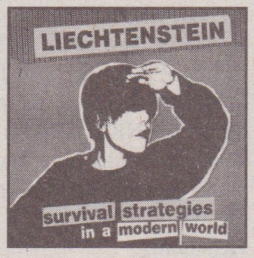
LOVER – "Worthless / Little Tramp"

I fell in love with this band with their *Booger in My Asshole* release. Similar to that, this one takes lyrics that really are not that pleasant and puts them to extremely catchy, mid-tempo power-pop. It's a combo that I happen to enjoy quite a bit. In this case, the lyrics aren't dumb and crude, just not terribly pleasant. This is another in a long line of quality releases coming from P. Trash, one of the more consistent labels around these days. (KK)
(P. Trash)

LUCKY SCARS – CD

From Tallahassee, Florida, LUCKY SCARS crank out a brand of punk rock 'n' roll that is probably best suited to witness live. It's not bad at all and done really well, but just not overly memorable in any way. I think the vocals are what loses me on this, cuz musically they are rock solid and kinda remind me of SOCIAL DISTORTION at times,





but the vocals seem more suited to a hardcore band like SLAPSHOT. (ML)
(self-released)

MAGNAFUX – CD

The CD from this five-piece out of Chicago, Illinois has the trashy, rockin' Scandinavian influence of GLUECIFER and the BACKYARD BABIES mixed with the straightforward punk of the KRAYS and CLASS ASSASSINS. But then about midway through, the disc takes an indie turn, somewhere along the lines of SUPERCHUNK meets the ENABLERS. Lots of different influences going on but the album isn't too schizophrenic—except for a track or two this one is pretty solid. Check out "Mississippi" and "Less Than Knowing." (RK)
(self-released)

MAKABERT FYND / NICE IDIOT – "Fuck Your Scene, Kid, Vol. 1" split EP

The second release here for MAKABERT FYND, who has Poffen of TOTALITÄR fame as one of their two vocalists. I like this stuff a lot more than their 7". They tear things up in a nothing-fancy, to-the-point style of ripping hardcore. NICE IDIOT features members of some of Sweden's current grindcore forces and shred in a similar style with more of an '82 US HC bent. (JU)
(Kranium)

MASAKARI – "Eden Compromised" EP

Four-track EP of burly metallic core from Ohio, colliding intricate Burning Sprits-influenced Japanese-sytle hardcore with (the admittedly Japanese-influenced) TRAGEDY-ish apocalyptic crust. Cut and recorded with a raw edge akin to the AWAKENING or FIGHTING DOGS, where the solos squeal out of a grimy mass of dark distortion, hoarse throaty vocals cough and bark off vocals similar to something you'd find on a '90s Japanese crust release (COLLAPSE SOCIETY? CROCODILE SKINK? HUMPTY DUMPTY? Somewhere in that direction), spewing doom-laden poetic lyrics about war and religion. Solid delivery; crank up another winner from Halo of Flies Records! (KS)
(Halo of Flies)

DAN MELCHIOR UND DAS MENACE – "Dim Are The Lights / I Don't Wanna Be Nice"

DAN MELCHIOR has one of those great, interesting, and very distinctive voices. It is so nice to listen to, plus he writes really cool songs with great lyrics. All of which should make me love this record. It's all here. But I just can't seem to understand why he is obscuring all of that talent with these extraneous electronic sounds and this nutty production. It all sounds so phony and it is just too damn distracting. (CK)
(Convulsive)

MIDWEST BEAT – "At the Gates" CD

A welcome breath of fresh air, these Midwesternites call to mind the punk-infused country twang of the REIGNING SOUND. The musicianship is tight with songs that have a definite punk edge, yet the music is as inspired by the harmonies and pop sensibilities of the BYRDS as much as any "punk" band. Maybe think of how the DETROIT COBRAS take oldies and update them… I am totally feeling this disc. (TB)
(Duck on Monkey)

MIGRAINE – "The Beyond" EP

I am totally into this fucking band! This is some raging hardcore shit. I saw MIGRAINE live, and on stage they brought back memories of the INDIGESTI gig I saw. Take that and add something reminiscent of SEPTIC DEATH / VIOLENT TUMOR-style vocals and you can get an idea of what MIGRAINE sounds like. They serve up a few atmospheric moments that may be drug-induced or just plain crazy. In all, I am won over and eat this shit up. (MS)
(Stress Domain)

MINORITY BLUES BAND – "Capitalized Suffering" CD

Although Japan's MINORITY BLUES BAND is held back a little by their vocals being in a second language (English), their music is pretty strong melodic punk. Sounds of LEATHERFACE, J CHURCH, and THE DOUGHBOYS come to mind. Good, powerful production, too, on this recording from 2003. After some internet searching I could not get any more info on this release or the current status of this once-defunct band. A solid full-length, still... (RL)
(Snuffy Smiles)

MINORITY BLUES BAND – "Momentary Beautiful Burnout" CD

A collection of songs from EPs and compilations from this Japanese band. The timeline is 2000 to 2004, so I don't know if they're still around. The music is a rough, melodic blend of JAWBREAKER and HÜSKER DÜ—upbeat and boppy and reminiscent of other good bands of this ilk like ANNALISE, BLOCKO, and you would have to throw J CHURCH in there, too. MINORITY BLUES BAND does a few covers here, including the Finnish band AMAZING TAILS (who must have cult following in Japan as all their stuff was re-released there last year) and old Scouser outfit DRIVE. The packaging is well done (a cool fold-out digipack) making this a very nice release all around. (AD)
(Snuffy Smiles)

MIRROR AND WIRES – "Colourized Audio Transmission" EP

Jeez, a track called "Pointless Circle"? It's so easy to make a flippant dismissal of the disc that I refuse to bite. Ultra-clean, overproduced quasi-surf instros that sound like something off a TV commercial. The B-side, "Chiaroscuro," stretches out in a not-entirely unsuccessful attempt at the sort of psych one might expect from the EP's title (and the ghastly photoshopped trippiness of the cover), but if you're going to do that shit, you need to go all in. (DD)
(Railroaded)

THE MIXELPRICKS – "Breakfast Edition" EP

This record delivers four songs of super sugary, sweet pop songs. THE MIXELPRICKS sound like a band that you'd expect to find on a Mutant Pop single from the mid '90s. It's that kind of bubblegum "punk rock" where at least half the songs are about girls, and it's all played in a style with no edge. Bands that play this type of music need something to separate them from the zillions of other bands doing the same thing. I heard a story once where someone asked Jon of PANSY DIVISION why every song they wrote was outrageously gay in their lyrically content and he responded by saying something to the effect that that's the only thing that really separated them from the sea of other alternative pop bands across the country. Perhaps he was being a bit too hypercritical, or perhaps my storyteller was exaggerating, but there is a bit of truth to that. You have to do something creative to get people to want to listen to your songs. Anything. Otherwise you're going to bore anyone that's not your personal friend, and your record will end up in the dollar bin, and reviewers will spend more of their review talking about how rad PANSY DIVISION was than they spent describing your band. (FS)
(Murk Ta)

MODERN CREATURES – LP

This is way fucking good. SISTERS OF MERCY fronted by SIOUXSIE SIOUX and then punked up a bit. MODERN CREATURES reminds me of my teenage years going to goth clubs and listening to either new wave or no wave in my room. I was really excited to get this for review 'cuz their 7" was basically my favorite record of last year. The band has just two basses and drums, so there's no room for guitar wankage—a total plus. It's melodic, it gets a little scream-y here and there, it has reverbed and layered vocals, and it has distorted bass intertwined with cleaner bass. Soaring and desperate. Yes. (MM)
(Grotesque Modern)

THE MOSTLY DEAD – "Slightly" EP

This DC four-piece has taken the pop punk / hardcore sound of SET YOUR GOALS and added the influence of Revolution Summer bands such as RITES OF SPRING or EMBRACE. They mix in a bit of the early-'90s Gravity Records sound to boot. It's not really

up my alley, but it's pretty good for what it is. The lyrics seem fairly intelligent and don't deal with romance, which is good. THE MOSTLY DEAD touches on politics in a bit of an oblique way, better than most of the bands they might be lumped in with otherwise. A few "wooooooooo-oooooo-ooooooooahs" in there, too—you know what I'm talking about. (VX)
(Mighty Science)

MOSTROS / MOTOCROSS – split EP

This record is a lot of fun! Four songs total, with both of these Spanish bands contributing two each. MOSTROS switches between melodic HC and snotty-but-poppy punk stuff, and MOTOCROSS is thrashier on one track and more rocking on the other. I have to say that one of the best parts of this record is the full-color drawn cover: a three-eyed bear wearing a pants-suit featuring the stars and stripes and sitting on a motorcycle! Tough! Bizarre! (VL)
(Discos Subterraneos / Flying Peluca)

MOTHER'S CHILDREN – "Dance to the Rock and Roll Band" EP

Great glam-influenced punk rock from that other America where the nice folk live way, way up north. A slight dose of power-pop and '60s Brit invasion mixed with a healthy helping of THE JOOK, THE SWEET, and THE INCREDIBLE KIDDA BAND, to name a few. It's brief but sure leaves its mark, and like all great records makes me thump the rickety tables of *MRR* demanding more. Hard glam at its best. (SD)
(Going Gaga)

MUGRE – "En Estos Tiempos" EP

I feel like I've been spoiled with the influx of great new hardcore records that I've heard recently. Throw on *En Estos Tiempos* in between spins of DESTINO FINAL's *Atrapados* and SACRED SHOCK's *You're Not With Us*, and you'll be convinced that you're in the midst of a modern-era hardcore resurgence. These songs are fast, loose, and raw, with unpredictable breaks, great drumming, and a singer that's not afraid to fly off the handle. I like MUGRE because they are not gimmicky, and their songs avoid being dour and plodding, yet they're also not overly bright and catchy sounding. MUGRE does the fast 'n' dirty modern hardcore style and I applaud 'em for that. I swear there are moments where it sounds like the TALK IS POISON and DEATHREAT sides from the classic 1999 split EP collided. Hey MUGRE, if you guys have broken up, I'm gonna be mad! (CI)
(Lengua Armada)

NAW DUDE – "Golf Pro" EP

Everything about this record is weird. Odd band name? Check. Two sides? Nope, just one has grooves. Photocopied cover? No. Pocket-sleeve cover? No. Silk-screened side of a Lone Star 12-pack box featuring a two-headed skeleton at an altar looking down upon the sacrifice of a baby done in the colors purple and sea-green? Check. Musically, I was expecting wacky thrash and song titles the caliber of "Bong-Mitvah," but instead it was brutal HC that reminded me of PAINTBOX mixed with some of the more recent Austin, TX, HC bands. (Note: NAW DUDE features the ex-vocalist of ARMY OF JESUS.) Relentless and pulverizing, but a certain quirky element that gives it the PAINTBOX feeling. Odd but very cool record. (VL)
(Depleted Resource)

NAYSAYER – "No Remorse" EP

Sometimes I try to calm myself and begin to look on the brighter side of things, enjoy life, and just try to be a more peaceful person; but then a freakin' band like NAYSAYER comes along and fucks it all up for me! Now, thanks to this EP, I can only imagine destruction and violence unleashed on society. Thanks a lot. There have been so many killer bands coming out of Richmond in the last few years, mostly known for amazing traditional USHC stuff, but this band falls more along the heavier side of things like contemporary ruffians TERROR, or early-'90s heavy-core pioneers INTEGRITY and MADBALL. But what's cool about NAYSAYER is that they don't descend too far into the realm of bad metal riffs, double-bass drumming, and over-the-top tough-guy posturing that makes most bands in this genre suck. This is just pure, unrelenting power-chord beat-down fronted by a guy who has a lot to get off his chest. Cool shit. (BG)
(Reaper)

NEMA BARIKADE – "S Maskou Lidumila" CD

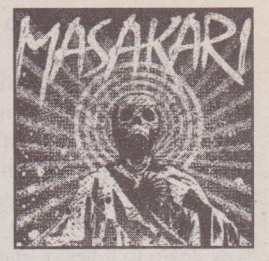
Dense, metallic Czech hardcore here. It seems like there are always bands doing this kind of thing somewhere in the world: Fast, chuggy riffs with gruff, vaguely political vocals and the occasional ska part to show their versatility. NEMA BARIKADE didn't exactly set me on fire, but I don't think I'm their target audience. (AM)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

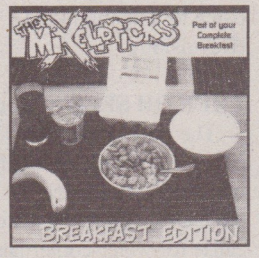
NERVE CITY – "I Fucked Death" 10"

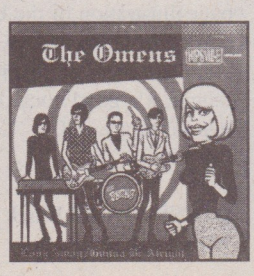
This (except the dirgey, slightly BARRETT-esque "Missing Persons") would seem like fairly rudimentary rootsy guitar-and-drums slop (in the not-necessarily-good-nor-bad sense) except for the tons of reverb on the vocals that makes them into some kind of arty smear, which is kind of interesting, though it doesn't really grab me; maybe it'll grab you. Only two of the six songs made much of an impression on me but, similarly, maybe they'll grab you. (DD)
(Kill Shaman)

NOFX – "Coaster" CD

25 years and running, NOFX still manages to consistently put out quality albums filled with catchy tunes and lyrical wit. After their first few recordings (which were actually fucking horrible—terrible music, and no wit) the band developed their trademark sound of melodic hardcore packed with big hooks and plenty of humor. They, like many others, heard BAD RELIGION's *Suffer*, (and unlike most others) took it, ran with it, and made it their own. Political and social themes have become more and more part of their lyrical focus over the past few albums, and are still in evidence here ("We Called It America," "Best God in Show"). Even with their well-known sense of humor still intact throughout most of the disc, *Coaster* also contains the most intensely personal song I've ever heard the band perform in "My Orphan Year." Politics, humor, and serious introspection all tied up with the high-energy punk style that has won NOFX legions of fans the world over. Me likes very much. (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords)







NUISANCE DRILLED – "All Is Well, Euphoric Ending" CD

Six-song CD of metal-influenced hardcore. NUISANCE DRILLED incorporates numerous sounds, including rock 'n' roll, heavy and slow riff-centric moments, and thrash-y hardcore. "Flower," for example, starts with a movie sample then kicks into speedy punk before slowing way down to a heavy chug. The vocals are delivered in a monotone scream on every track. All this sounds fine but I'm not compelled to listen to it again. (MH)
(Revulsion)

THEE OH SEES – "Zork's Tape Bruise" LP

The dude who shares a (thin) wall with me has been raving about this band. He also expressed a preference for the dude's last band, the COACHWHIPS, which I imagine has been cause for water-cooler jam deliberations. THEE OH SEES play garage rock with some punk and psych leanings. I'm way into the slower songs (fucking great) that are free from punk pretenses, but I'm just not as into the garage-ier and punker songs. While a lot of this isn't my thing, I can still tell it's good. It might be your thing, especially if John Dwyer has impressed you in the past. (P$)
(Kill Shaman)

OMEGAS – "False Worship" EP

The first thing that caught my ears was the mishmash of early NYHC signifiers that strangely enough sound either entirely accidental or carefully studied—from the fuzzy guitar sound à la URBAN WASTE or REAGAN YOUTH, to the proto-breakdowns in unexpected places, to the leads bordering on solos that sound somewhere between BAD BRAINS and THE MOB (NY). I'd say the latter is a suitable reference point for the OMEGAS' overall musical aesthetic. There's something a little too plain about these songs that keep them from being fully captivating, but it's still decent and definitely an interesting listen, and I could see the OMEGAS writing a great LP with some more time and honing of their chops. (DG)
(Powered)

OMENS – "Look Away / Gonna Be Alright"

Blazing '60s-style garage, organ and all, with a great snotty female vocalist…wait a minute, judging by the listings on the back, the singer is named Michael? Could be a guy or a gal, I guess, though the mystery is deepened by the cover illustration of the band featuring a gal in front of the band, though maybe she's supposed to just be there by happenstance? Not that it matters; it's good vocalizing with a good band on good songs. (DD)
(Hipsville)

OMENS – "Send Black Flowers" CD

It's great to see these guys still keeping the '60s garage punk spirit alive, long after the revival trend has faded. Now we know who's really into this shit and who the fair-weather fans were. Yeah man, I'm talking to you! The OMENS throw down ten new tracks here, and each one is a finger-snappin' rocker full of fuzz guitar, twang, and haunting organ swirl. If you dig the early CYNICS albums, or just freakin' rock and roll in general, you should get down with this. And definitely check them out live if they end up playing a ramshackle dive bar near you. You'll have a good time, trust me. (BG)
(Hipsville)

ONE VOICE – "Break Free" LP

Break Free is another unfortunate Crucial Response release that is magnified by the fact that the material is already available in different formats (except one song). The guitar work on this album is less than elementary and the vocals range from annoying to comical. This recently departed Belgian band hits a low point with a song called "Kid Till Death," a thin veil for the entire life and work of the band…? This reviewer says yes. They shoulda just covered an entire 7 SECONDS album. (RM)
(Crucial Response)

ORGANIC – "The Life and Times of Sal Sagev" CD

I must admit, I usually have a tendency to be bummed when I have to do the CD portion of my reviews each month. To put it frankly, the vast majority of CDs I have received to review have sucked pretty hard. However, every so often one comes along that brings me a ray of hope that the rest won't suck. This is one of them. *The Life and Times of Sal Sagev* compiles ORGANIC's first EP and CD with two demos, two live tracks, and eight new songs. I also kinda feel like a jerk for making comparisons to older bands, but with this one I feel the need: Imagine early AMERICAN STEEL crossed with GRIMPLE and slight hints of KID DYNAMITE and DILLINGER FOUR. (BD)
(Boss Tuneage)

ORGANISM – "Hope" LP

I've had the CD version of this album for months already. As usual, vinyl proves to be superior format. *Hope* is one of the strongest Japanese HC releases in recent memory, and it only sounds better in its first vinyl release. Primarily, ORGANISM draws from the NIGHTMARE school of speedy hardcore punk, but with two vocalists the verses and gang choruses are thicker and more complex and the song structures are occasionally more unpredictable than the genre would suggest, particularly in the unhinged chaos of "Judge." I fear that I don't have the capability to explain, with words, just how fucking badass this record really is. Seriously, I'm tempted to offer a money-back guarantee to anyone who picks this up on my recommendation. It's that great. As I understand it, ORGANISM is already establishing their reputation as a ferocious live band, and I can only hope that a US tour is in the works sometime in the near future. I should mention that Germany's Hardware Records went all out with the packaging for this record, including new and vastly superior cover art (relative to the CD) and an Obi strip. Interestingly, the design and layout was done by 02 from the mysterious and awesome DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR (whose demo 7" will shortly be available from Crust War). (AU)
(Hardware)

OUTDOORSMEN – "You're a Tattletale Baby / Hey, Jessica"

No-frills garage punk, beauty in simplicity. No crazy, angsty vocals, no weedling guitars, and no goddamn hipster pop-rock bullshit. The songs clock in right around two minutes and the drums, guitar, bass, and vocals all kind of do the same thing at the same time. In a certain great way, the OUTDOORSMEN nail the mid-'90s garage sound without coming off like some craphole revival act trying to walk in some other band's footsteps. It took a couple of spins, but the two quick takes here really grew on me. (IS)
(Wild! American)

PAHAA VERTA – "VVVV" EP

This six-song EP out of Finland features some pretty raging '80s US-style hardcore. The songs are well played and at different times bring NEGATIVE FX, INFEST, or POISON IDEA to mind; the vocals are good in a blown-out Choke kinda way. My only grievance with this record is that while the execution and energy are both there, the songs don't leave nearly as much of a lasting impression as any of the above-mentioned bands. It's not that it's bad, but it just doesn't really seem to stand out. (DB)
(Roku / Several Casualties / Nightstick Justice / Sharkcore)

PERSONANGREPP – "Fuck You Very Much" EP

Imagine if GORILLA ANGREB, the SOVIETTES, NAZIS FROM MARS, and KNUGEN FALLER fucked the shit out of each other, and all the bodily fluids and secretions mutated into a band of rejects. This is that band. Rhythmic anthems galore to head-bop along to. I really like the addition of the horn and the cover of the DAMNED's "Stab Your Back" sung in Swedish—for real, it sounds like a Swedish SOVIETTES. (RR)
(DMC, no address)

THE PHEROMOANS – "Revamper" EP

Nice debut release from this English group. The two songs on the A-side sound sorta like the SWELL MAPS and SIC ALPS, or what you may expect from any random early-'80s Rough Trade single you stumble upon. The B-side

sounds nothing like the other songs and kinda reminds me of the "The Gift" by the VELVET UNDERGROUND; just a repetitive beat with a story spoken over it. (MU)
(Convulsive)

PLEXI 3 – "Tides of Change" LP

This three-piece plays some nice bubblegummy, power-poppy, melodic punk with female vocals and a lot of hooks. It sounds good—it could almost be from 1979, like something you would hear on one of those *Powerpearls* comps. PLEXI 3 reminds me of the likes of SELBY TIGERS or ME FIRST, or the FASTBACKS even…or when they speed things up, a little like the SOVIETTES. High praise. (AD)
(Bachelor)

POWER IS POISON – "If Not Us...Who? If Not Now…When?" EP

Blistering anarcho hardcore, played at breakneck speed with the power and intensity you expect from those as impassioned about the issues POWER IS POISON sings about. Highly recommended! (AA)
(Chaos Alliance)

PRETTY WHORES – "Teens of USA" CD

This Swedish three-piece sounds a lot like fellow countrymen RANDY, and to a lesser extent THE HIVES. Fast, frantic, and tight blasts of punk with a slight garage-y feel and a lot of noisy loud guitars. This rocks in all the right places and the eight tracks breeze through quickly without getting stale. (AD)
(self-released)

PRINCESS THUNDERSTORM – "Maneater / Rock Is Dead"

When I set the needle down on this record, the A-side song sounded really familiar. I spent a few listens trying to figure out whom the band was covering. After several tries and no avail, I concluded that the opening riff was just very similar to an old 7 SECONDS song. That's about the only thing the two bands share in common, though. This EP has two fun, rockin' tunes (with DIY packaging and colored vinyl to boot) that make me feel like I'm watching these dudes play in a sweaty basement in Anytown, USA. I missed PRINCESS THUNDERSTORM last time they were in town, but hopefully they'll come back sooner than later. (BD)
(Humdinger / Family Night)

PUNCH – LP

PUNCH has been one of my favorite hardcore bands since they started a few years back, and I've been eagerly awaiting this album since their 7" shredded my eardrums last year. They do not disappoint. This is an absolute *monster* of an LP. They've added a bit of a youth crew feel to their brutal thrash, and it only makes it better. These kids are so far head of the pack it's scary. The guitars hit with lightning precision, the bass thunders, and the drums just pummel. Add Meghan's amazing, pissed-off vocals to the mix and you've got a band that can't be stopped. Lyrically, PUNCH is best known for espousing two causes, both of which have their place here: veganism (on "Feminists, Don't Have a Cow") and a militant defense of cyclists (on "Right of Way" and "Fuming"). While these songs are incredibly strong, so are the rest, with lyrics that range from the personal to the political without ever being trite or stale. Have I already mentioned that you need to own this record? Just buy it already, Oh, and it's on pretty pink vinyl, too. (VX)
(Discos Huelga / 625)

THE QUATERMASS – CD

Hard rock from Mallorca, Spain. Heavy riffs, stupid lyrics, and too much AC/DC influence. The record even starts with the same opening riff as "For Those About to Rock." Ugh. A note included with the CD says that the QUARTERMASS features former members of DISEASE who appeared on the *MRR* compilation *Public Safety*. It is nice to see hardcore bands still mutate into metal bands. (CK)
(Punk Away)

RADIO CITY – LP

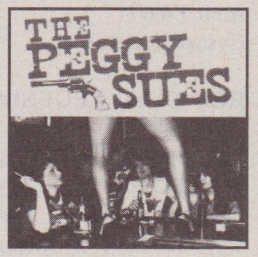
A beautiful comp (with the packaging, info, quality, all top notch) of forgotten New Yorkers RADIO CITY; this material consists of their 1977 to 1980 output. Definitely on the power-pop light side of things, which suits me fine. Huge nods towards the BYRDS, BIG STAR, BEATLES (especially the Lennon heavy tunes), and a touch of very early ALICE COOPER. This is fluffy, so don't expect much, if any, in the way of punk rock, but don't let this put ya off parting with the spondulics for a great platter of pop. I love my pop, 'specially when it comes this good, and from a band that, until now, I never even knew existed. I'm hooked. (SD)
(Radio Heartbeat)

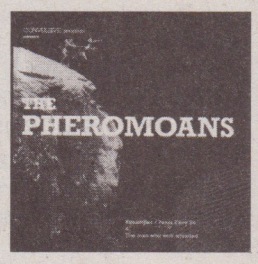
THE RAMJAC – "Curserer" EP

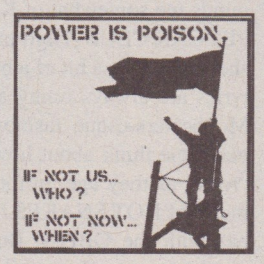
The debut release from these Portland transplants features four songs that are pretty cool. The band has received comparisons to BRAINIAC, BLOOD BROTHERS, JESUS LIZARD, and half the bands on Skin Graft, and I'd have to agree, though THE RAMJAC sounds like a blend of all of them together—not just one of 'em. The first song starts off way too close to BIG BLACK's "Jordan, Minnesota," but at least it ends on some different notes. Packaged with a lyric booklet and CDR of the same songs. (MU)
(self-released)

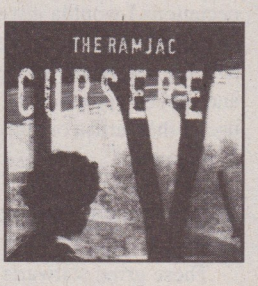
THE RATS – "Intermittent Signals" LP

You punks are fucking lucky! Fred and Toody Cole have elected to re-release THE RATS' entire catalog of three LPs. This month you are treated to the second installment, *Intermittent Signals*. Mr. Cole chugs through some truly incredible tunes on this LP. You get "Nightline," "Haywire Desire," "Contradictions," "Kids Are Kids" and the killer track "Descending Shadows." What an amazing song!! Side one concludes with "Thoughts by Now" and "Defiance," the latter co-written with Toody Cole. Side two begins with "Daddy's in the Shadows" followed by "Nightmare" and the menacing "Radio Pulse." Next up you get "Heaven Don't Cry" and a small slice of rock and roll perfection, "Running Away from You." Then "It's a Lie" leads into "Animal," a song that was later embraced by DEAD MOON. This LP is a fucking benchmark for all to measure up to! (BR)
(Mississippi)









REAKCE NA ZMENU / RISPOSTA – split EP

REAKCE NA ZMENU comes first with four tracks of grindcrust. Raw dual-vocal assault, heavy tonnage on the low end, and manic guitars. RISPOSTA are more metal, slightly more polished, and way more straightforward. Metallic Eurocrust with liberal doses of "biking through the wilderness" parts. Getting smashed while these bands were playing would be super fun, especially in Czech, where they are both from. (WN)
(Insane Society)

RED EYED LEGENDS – "Wake Up Legend" LP

The disappointment I felt after hearing the first RED EYED LEGENDS 12" was huge and indescribable. Chris Thomson's voice has always been one my favorite things about punk / hardcore, as vague and all-encompassing as that sounds, and the fact that he was now fronting a totally mediocre garage-rawk combo was just depressing. In the face of the FURY 7"? And the also-untouchable CIRCUS LUPUS / MONORCHID / SKULL KONTROL? Not to mention IGNITION, LAS MORDIDAS, etc. At any rate, this, while not in the league of any of his prior bands, is somewhat of a salve to the aforementioned crybaby-style disappointment. It's still more rock than I would like, but the guitar is more jagged sounding, there's way less rock-a-rolla bullshit, and the lady on back-up vox reminds me somewhat of Kim Thompson of CUPID CAR CLUB. High praise! There's no lyric sheet, which is a bit of a bummer, as Thomson's lyrics are always funny and incisive in a Sam McPheeters-esque fashion… Listening to this made me think about how punks shift towards "rock" as they age, in the way Rick Fork, formerly of HOT SNAKES / DRIVE LIKE JEHU, has with the OBITS. But whatever, this is a good garage rock record—it's snotty and propulsive and if I didn't have such weighted expectations I woulda just spent the whole review gushing about the mangled / fractured guitars and the awesome yowled 'n' snarling vocals, and maybe complaining a little about the overuse of the Farfisa organ…. (LG)
(Corleone)

RESISTANT CULTURE – "Welcome to Reality" LP

These grind stalwarts have made a name for themselves with their mix of Native American musical elements and grind to make a statement about resistance to assimilation, and to push the boundaries of punk. Things are really heavy, fast, and metallic on *Welcome to Reality*, with less of the usual quiet Native American moments that make RESISTANT CULTURE really stand out. Right-on people with a right-on message and a very defined sound. They have a great vision; I'd like to see it more fully realized. (AA)
(Profane Existence)

RETAINERS – LP

As bands like the CARBONAS, the FEELERS, and REATARDS have fallen apart, splintered, and otherwise imploded, the RETAINERS follow in those same footsteps, having crashed and burned. Luckily they left us with this ten-song monster LP (recorded in 2007), a fitting headstone for a band that nailed the OBLIVIANS-birthed Memphis / Southern dick-swinging punk / garage / whatever sound. Ferocious yet melodic! Reverb-soaked vocals that absolutely leap outta the grooves, at times matching Sir Reatard's tight-pants angstiness. The RETAINERS' handful of 7"s probably remain the best format for their balls-out, all-go guitar attack, but the songs on this album are definitely their strongest, making a convert of someone like me who had dismissed them as more of the same. Well done! Limited to about 500 copies. Act fast. (IS)
(P. Trash / Radio 81)

THE REVERSE COWBOYS – "Elvis Product" EP

Passable punk. I think these guys have the "right" influences and are probably going for a KBD kinda sound (ICE AND THE ICED cover kinda hammers that home), but it's a little too good-timey and the production is much too hi-fi. Lacks a certain mean quality that bands of this type should have. (BB)
(Bowery)

RIISTETYT – "Lakija Järjestys" EP

This 1981 classic was RIISTETYT's vinyl debut—seven tracks that helped define the early Finnish hardcore sound. Though now a quarter-century old, this EP somehow seems fresh on this sorely needed re-release. The unforgettable production pairs a cloud of bass riffing combined with trademark shouted choruses. This release is, however, carefully crafted to give the feeling of a live performance, which RIISTETYT would continue to use as their keynote style. "Tomiiko taa systeemi" is still their standout here—articulate and punchy. A classic, of course, but available in a limited re-pressing of 700 copies. (SS)
(Höehnie)

THE RIPPERS – "Why Should I Care About You?" LP

First song, side A: "My Brown Friend." I am already a huge fan of this record. Dropping the needle on the vinyl only confirms that I'm right. If you're a fan of up-tempo punk rock that has some garage, some twang, and some swamp in it, you will not want to miss this one. Seriously, well done. The songs are well written, well played, well recorded, and well mixed. And what the fuck? These guys are from Sardinia? Is Sardinia (which is kind of part of Italy, and kind of not part of Italy) going to become the new France? Wow. (KK)
(Slovenly)

ROGUE NATION – "Be Your Own Rogue Nation" LP

Earnest hardcore-influenced political pop punk. Say that three times fast and don't buy this record. "I attended public high school and it still astounds me how out-of-control a lot of my classes were"—listen, pal, being punk is about being the worst kid in the fucking world, doing as many drugs as possible, screwing until your prick threatens to leave home, and stealing. Your classmates can be out of control, but you shouldn't know, because you should be off stealing cars instead of going to school. Another thing—don't write a song about a kid you talked to on AIM. Your heart's in (I guess) the right place from some people's standpoint, but seriously your whole band's vibe is like 2001 and it's 2009. (BB)
(Suicide Watch)

ROOM 101 – "Contemporary Programming" EP

Winston Smith (best known among you punkers for the DEAD KENNEDYS artwork) designed the front cover art for this release, and I think the best way to describe the music is to say that it sounds the way a Winston Smith collage looks. It's got a lot going on—political, kinda cool, but also kinda juvenile. ROOM 101 is the project of one man who recorded some rock songs and then added a lot of samples of radio / TV broadcasts over it. (MU)
(Smallest Axe, no address)

ROUGH STUFF – "Out of Control / Anti Politician"

Debut vinyl release from this new Japanese punk / Oi band. Their sound is total early '80s UK worship, and I gotta say they pull it off nicely. The A-side is recalls the LAST RESORT (right down to the trashy guitar sound) on a tuff, plodding stomper; the flip is a faster number reminiscent of INFA RIOT. These guys play loose but not sloppy, and the production complements the music well. I'm not immediately fond of the singer's style—I wish it was more forceful or something—and the lyrics are the standard derivative street-punk fare, but otherwise this is a very solid release. Oh yeah, ridiculous / great cover, too—a cartoonist's rendering of what I imagine a CRO-MAGS show looked like in the late '80s. It's a boot-party, and yer all invited! (CS)
(Longshot / True Force)

SACRED SHOCK – "You're Not With Us" LP

OK, SACRED SHOCK rules. Seen 'em live loads, I even got the little EP-size records, but

I was totally ill-prepared for this slab of genius, and I just got my ass blown out…by dudes who I have seen wearing dresses. SACRED SHOCK delivers rampaging hardcore with Japanese fury and Texas style, and that would be enough to win me over, but fuck man, the guitars on this record are so beyond the call of awesome that I can't even do the man justice. A little bit haunting, like on the first REALLY RED EP, but it seems like the guitar is getting assaulted, even when melodies are coming out of it, like on the first HÜSKER DÜ 12". And don't even get me started on the guitar attack that closes side A, it overshadows the rest of the track so much that I had to go back and listen again just to make sure the first part of the song is killer (it is). The best thing about *You're Not With Us* is that it is not at all typical—SACRED SHOCK managed to write an original record while staying within the basic confines of hardcore punk, and as a result, all the comparisons in the world can't do it justice. As close to a perfect hardcore 12" as I've heard in a long, long time. Get this now. (WN)
(Residue)

SCREAMING FEMALES – "Power Move" LP

It's not uncommon for punk bands in this day and age to add grunge in their music. After all, most current young bands grew up when NIRVANA was on top of the world. It is rare to find a band that is overtly grunge that still maintains a solid DIY punk sound and feeling, but SCREAMING FEMALES has pulled it off. *Power Move* is SCREAMING FEMALES' third full-length album, and in some respects it could be their best. The musicianship and songwriting are certainly better than ever. Some of the songs here are a bit longer and more sedated than their previous work, but these songs work well in an album format and they accentuate the raw and frantic songs. *Power Move* plays like an album, rather than a collection of songs. Even though the record starts off kind of slow, from start to finish it's good. Really good. (FS)
(Don Giovanni)

SECTION 13 – "A Demonstration" CD

According to the Boss Tuneage website, SECTION 13 formed after a chance meeting in a tattoo shop. From the photo on the cover of the CD, I can only imagine the conversation went thusly: "Excuse me, my good fellow, I can see you are getting a RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE tattoo and despite this obvious error in judgment, do you fancy starting a band that will sound a bit like Dave Smalley-era DAG NASTY?" "Why yes, I'm so glad you asked." While I jest (although not about the tattoo, unfortunately) this is in fact a very enjoyable album. The sound is thicker and less melodic than the aforementioned DAG NASTY, but the vocals (by the guy from VISIONS OF CHANGE apparently, which makes sense) are a dead ringer at times. Great stuff. I especially like "X Song." The thinking man's GALLOWS, perhaps? (AM)
(Boss Tuneage)

SEPTIC DEATH – "Now That I Have the Attention… What Do I Do With It?" LP

An exact reproduction bootleg of the UK version of the SEPTIC DEATH LP from 1985, which was made up of parts of the Boise band's debut 12" and their high point—parts that were partially re-recorded in San Francisco along with new tracks added for a total of eighteen songs. Here the inner sleeve is printed as an insert and the labels are shoddy, but otherwise it's pretty on par with the original Pusmort release with the Pushead and Squeal artwork reproduced. The sound quality is decent. Bootlegged at this point almost as mercilessly as THE MISFITS, it's baffling that this classic material has not been properly re-released (especially since there's been mastered legit versions ready to go on two different labels for about a decade), but I guess the LP's title lends a clue there. Meanwhile, blast some of the most savage hardcore from the 1980s, and help a Euro crusty pay for their cider, rent, original US Hardcore collectibles on eBay, or whatever lunacy as they laugh to the bank. That's what punk's about, right?!! Yeesh. (KS)
(bootleg)

SEX PISTOLS – "Screen on the Green Cinema 29.8.76" LP

Infamous early gig by the PISTOLS at their sneering snarling "best." Sound quality is mud, cover sucks, and it sounds like there are three people in the crowd. All your favorite songs done slower than on the records. History? You can keep your fucking history. This sucks. (TB)
(bootleg scum)

SHIRKS – "DC Is Doomed" EP

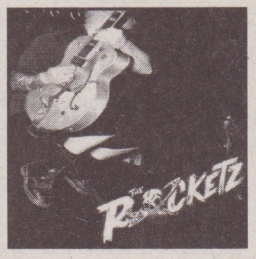
DC is doomed, indeed. Who the fuck would have ever thought a great punk band would come outta our nation's capitol? And I'm not talking about some spikey hair BLANKS 77 wannabe group of 17-year-olds. The SHIRKS come out swinging just as hard on their second 7" as they did their debut. Fast, tough, and hard-hitting with a pure rock 'n' roll swagger, heavy on the low-end in a way not seen since the DEVIL DOGS stormed the scene. The SHIRKS feature Alec Budd of the PROBLEMATICS—an important point to make. Because, though I'm sure he and the rest of the SHIRKS would rather put some distance between themselves and that past, it's hard *not* to hear the PROBLEMATICS in these songs. Sounds like they've been rattling around Budd's head for the past ten years, refined to near perfection. (IS)
(self-released)

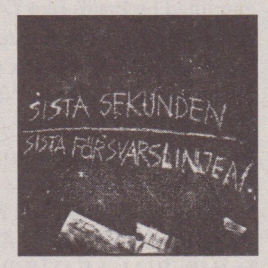
SISTA SEKUNDEN – "Sista Försvarslinjen" EP

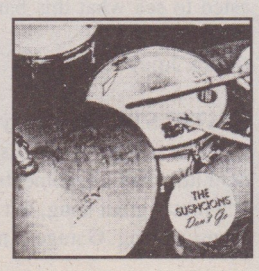
Melodic youth crew, thankfully sans anything tough, that has more going for it than most bands doing this style. Most of the songs have an OUTLAST vs. STRIKE ANYWHERE vs. GORILLA BISCUITS thing going on, while others dwell on the melodic side of things with singing, harmonizing, and quasi-MAIDEN riffing (that brings ETÆ to mind) that gets a bit close to cheesy, but doesn't cross that line. Everything's fairly straightforward, with some quirky breakdowns and bizarre slowed-down bridges here and there. There's enough variation in the riffs and song structures to keep things interesting, and the drumming is particularly noteworthy as it cements these as songs rather than collections of riffs. (DG)
(P. Trash / Instigate)

SKIN LIKE IRON – "All Human Failing' LP

I love this band. My favorite Bay Area band by far. They *crusssssh*. I loved the 10" of last year, but this is next-level shit. It's like a super intense INTEGRITY, but with some SKITSYSTEM bursts and even some FROM ASHES RISE lead styling. What I love about SKIN LIKE







IRON is the way they build and ebb throughout the record; the songs blend together as one enormous door slamming in the depths of hell. Smoke a joint, put the headphones on, lie on the floor, and have your fucking head caved in… *hollllly* shit. Easily top ten of the year, second only to the MARKED MEN album so far… *fuuuuuuccccccck*. (TB)
(Free Cake)

SLÖA KNIVAR – "Born to Rule" EP

Ripping fast punk that sounds like it's creepily fronted by a ten-year-old. There's something indescribably weird (in a great way) about this band. Classic punk sound on steroids, and great snotty lyrics. A Danish ZERO DE CONDUITE? You tell me. (AA)
(Den Magiska Cirkeln)

SNAKE FLOWER 2 – "Renegade Daydream" LP

Yeaaaaaaaaaaaah feeeeeeucking ha, 40 seconds in and I've claimed this as record of the freaking year. Imagine the best-ever, most rockin' out there CLONE DEFECTS song that ya ever heard, then multiply it by ten, then stick some HAWKWIND and CAN into the mix, and you're still not close to the utter shiver-inducing brilliance of this record. Boy oh boy, once in a while a garage record will come out and make ya wanna kill dead things whilst battering your own head with a cheap 40. It's got the hooks, the tunes, the unstoppable momentum of riffage, whilst on the same hand bringing an acid-induced freak-out that just sends this platter to a new level. A modern man's ELECTRIC PRUNES. My day is made. (SD)
(Tic Tac Totally)

SONIC RITUAL – "Take the Edge" EP

Included with this release was a note accurately describing the sound as metal punk in the vein of CELTIC FROST and TANK. The vocals especially are rooted in the NWOBHM style, exemplified by bands like TANK, HOLOCAUST, and SATAN. Unfortunately though, they are somewhat buried in a mix that privileges mostly fuzzy guitars and bass. Nevertheless, side A is a killer MOTÖRHEAD / TANK-style ripper, while side B ventures into CELTIC FROST territory that sometimes gets a little too stoney for my taste (i.e. a little more KYUSS than CELTIC FROST). SONIC RITUAL's members played in IMPERIAL LEATHER, E.T.A., DS-13, etc. This record is limited to 300 copies. I'm interested to see what this band does in the future. (DB)
(Black Juju)

STATIC STATIC – "Psychic Eyes" LP

I got a little bored listening to this one. It definitely has its moments, and "Psychic Eyes" is a pretty great song, but as a whole the record seems to drag. Garage-y new wave with certain bulky percussive elements and some fuzzed-out keys. STATIC STATIC has a 7" out on HoZac, if that provides you with any sort of frame of reference. It's somewhere between garage and new wave, like a more fuzzed-out, pulsating DIGITAL LEATHER. It's treading a territory that I'm pretty comfortable with, but they're not treading it in a manner I'm too stoked on. I didn't like the INTELLIGENCE record I heard last month, and I have a feeling if you're into the INTELLIGENCE as well as bands like BLACK ORPHAN or DIGITAL LEATHER, then this record might float your boat. (P$)
(Tic Tac Totally)

STUCK LUCKY – "Possom Soul" CD

Whoever orchestrated this exercise in wack jams and thought that it would fit into this mag's subcultural niche was a little off. Like THE VOODOO GLOW SKULLS via FLOGGING MOLLY, plus a little bit of alt-rock flavored pretension. Some of the lyrics are pretty good, others are not. (P$)
(Community)

THE SUSPICIONS – "Don't Go / Time"

I don't know exactly when it started, but we are right in the middle of a power-pop resurgence. This single sounds like it could have been taken off of one of those *Powerpearls* compilations. If you're a fan of power-pop, as I am, this is good news. Two tracks here and both are very basic, straightforward, well played, and slightly lo-fi. Make no mistake about it, that's a 100% compliment. Think POINTED STICKS, sometimes with female vocals. Oh yeah. (KK)
(Nerve Wracking)

THE TEENAGE LOVERS – "Number One / I Wanna Be Boy"

Lo-fi, dance-inducing garage punk. The TEENAGE LOVERS have got hints of the fun-loving heydays of '65 with a nice touch of the vacant-stare new wave of 1980. It's basic without losing any of the hip-shaking moments—taking in the NO BUNNY party vibe, whilst still hanging on to the murder punk feel of all those Goner Records hipsters. A great little record that manages to bring the Cuban heels and skinny tie together in perfect harmony. (SD)
(Randy)

TELEVISION PERSONALITIES – "My New Tattoo / Funny He Never Married"

Daniel Treacy is one of the finest songwriters in the world. The TELEVISION PERSONALITIES' early records, including the *And Don't The Kids Just Love It* LP and the *Part Time Punks* single, are bona-fide DIY bedroom punk classics. Writing in *The Guardian* (I know, I know) Alan McGee of Creation Records described Treacy as "The UK's version of Jonathan Richman, as re-imagined by Ray Davies." His impact on the world of independent music (particularly that of the fey variety) cannot be undermined. However, at some point, Treacy took his Syd Barret fixation a little too far and seems to have gone off the deep end. 2006's *My Dark Places* had its moments of brilliance, but this single, despite its very promising titles, are meandering, self-indulgent twaddle, I'm disappointed to say. (AM)
(Good Village, no address)

THURNEMAN – "Luggsliten Evnad" EP

THURNEMAN is the soundtrack for skipping school to smoke cigarettes at the industrial plateau. Or perhaps years later visiting the secluded spot where you spent your idyllic punk adolescence (or as idyllic as a punk adolescence in hindsight can get), back when "We're Gonna Fight" was your anthem and the fun was never gonna end, and wondering what the fuck happened. Desperate vocals over bleak wasteland melodies played through the kind of clean-ish guitar tone that I'd expect for this style. The drumming is more D-beat than anything, and I could see this being an awkward fit for the music, but it works perfectly and adds its own dynamic. Things only gets bleaker towards the end, with an instrumental and a final song that's pretty reminiscent of a sped-up "Something I Learned Today" before ending abruptly with no resolve. (DG)
(Puke 'n' Vomit)

TILL DEATH – "The World You Created" EP

The matrix on side one lets me know that even D-beat is bigger in Texas. Well, then let's drop the needle and find out! I rock it on 45 RPM first...high-pitched eerie sounding D-beat intro, I like it until the vocals let me know I'm probably meant to be jamming this bad boy on 33. I drop the speed down, and it would appear that, mostly, D-beat is just slower and more boring in Texas. I kinda wanna be nice—it's obvious that there is positive effort behind the release—but this is so damned boring and sloppy and suffers from horrible mastering throughout, which drops the volume in one channel or the other randomly. Total by-the-numbers plodding generic D-beat. (WN)
(Neuromechanix)

TRANZMITORS – "Busy Singles" LP

No regular reader of this magazine will have managed to miss the skyscraper-sized TRANZMITORS crush that our power-pop-minded staffers have developed over the last few years. Well, it all started (for this reviewer at least) with the first track on this singles comp, "Bigger Houses, Broken Homes," which is still to this day their best song. *Busy Singles* collects all the tracks from their pre-LP singles and EPs, most of which are now out of print. Get this now and find out what all the fuss was about. (AM)
(Deranged)

TYVEK – LP

I had kind of given up on TYVEK, disillusioned that they failed to follow up on their initial absolutely perfect 7"s. Not that I thought they were lousy—more that vague disinterest that settles in after a band fails to live up to such heightened expectations… But the more I listened to this new record, the more I got into it. They offer up their classic through-the-lens-of-Detroit TELEVISION PERSONALITIES / SWELL MAPS / URINALS-tinged off-kilter pop with such clouded vigor and intent! Those three bands in caps mean something when referenced in such a way as this! The second side starts out with the live favorite "Building Burning," a different, more introspective version of the same song that ends side one. The first version reminded me somewhat of the more somber / slower WIRE songs, and having the jammed-out invigorated version start off the second side seems like a total affirmation. The next one after that is so fucking rad and catchy, almost in a WIRE *Pink Flag* manner, yet has this weird ELECTRIC EELS feel, those kind of aggro lurches in the classic DAVE E style… The record then goes into these weird directionless yet compelling dirges, which is maybe what makes it such a confusing proposition? But fuck it; I think it's ultimately a classic knowing / dumb platter in the tradition of bands that you probably care about. (LG)
(Siltbreeze)

BOBBY UBANGI – "Another Girl Like You" EP

Douchemaster usually does no wrong by me, but I have to say this platter is a little on the weak side, even for a twee pansy pop-lover such as myself. BOBBY UBANGI sounds like the band playing at Al's Diner on *Happy Days* while Chachi and Potsy make eyes at each other when Joanie's back is turned. It's "perfectly crafted pop," but maybe a little too crafted? (AM)
(Douchemaster)

THE UNDERTONES – "An Anthology" LP

Oh so dreamy! It's the sweet power-pop awkwardness of the UNDERTONES, a little rougher around the edges, but still sounding fucking great. Faster, rougher, and punker versions of songs, plus a few that I can't really place. The '79 demo tracks are gems, and it seems worth it to pick up this LP just for them. The flipside of '78 demo tracks is interesting, but not really throw-it-on-to-listen-and-love material. (AA)
(bootleg)

URBAN UNREST – "On a String" EP

A Finnish band that sounds like they worship the good old USHC. URBAN UNREST delivers a six-track disc of just that, old school US hardcore punk. Pretty decent shit here. Not breaking new ground by any means, but well-done rapid-paced tunes. (MS)
(Rabbit's Foot / United Shoebrothers)

VEE DEE – "Public Mental Health System" 2xLP

Heavy psych-rock goodness from Chicago. The first song reminded me of SPACEMEN 3, but way more rockin' with lots of wah-wah use. None of the other songs on this double album remotely reminded me of the SPACEMEN 3. Nonstop rock with psych guitar solos. Raw power. I'm really stoked that this is a double album. It seems to be a rare thing these days and this feels like one big batch of songs the band wrote during the same short time period and were super stoked on all of them. (MU)
(Criminal IQ)

VISITORS – "Tropic of Cancer" EP

Wow…rad! The VISITORS are from Nova Scotia in Canada. I have relations in Fredericton! Did you need to know that? No? OK…this is *soooo* rad. Sounds like the LILLINGTONS, RIVERDALES, and the SOVIETTES on a fun vacation together. Super proficient, fun RAMONES-style punk with mad hooks and catchy choruses. It's sunny outside, I have no work on a Monday, and this record is the perfect soundtrack to my day. Thanks guys, you rule! (TB)
(House Party)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES – "Fit the Description" EP

Yeah! Punk fuckin' rock 'n' roll! WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES takes all the vitriol from '80s punk rock, and adds a dose of '90s indifference, and comes up with a perfect blend of '00s punk rock! Do *not* underestimate this band from the Great White North, and pick up any of their albums if you know what's good for you!! (ML)
(Problem Child)

WHORES OF WAR – "Good Son" EP

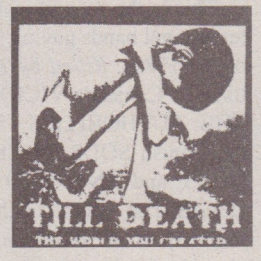
This Redwood City band of mostly women plays straightforward '80s-style hardcore on the more generic side, with most of the music feeling pretty familiar to me. The riffs and vocals are aggressive and remind me of MARGARET THRASHER at certain points, but the lyrics are way more vulgar...but maybe I'm just a prude. (DA)
(self-released)

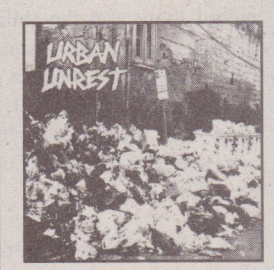
YHTEIS KUNNAN YSTAVAT? – "Porojen Maa" EP

YHTEIS KUNNAN YSTAVAT? opens *Porojen Maa* with "Testamennti," a song that is begging to be placed on a mix tape. You know, the kind of song you put on a mix in between some classics and then your friends hear it and are like, "Who the fuck is this band?" It's that caliber of greatness—a perfectly penned quick hardcore punk song with a chorus so catchy that it's bound to swim around in your brain for months. The rest of *Porojen Maa* could've easily been a letdown, but all in all it's a great EP. These Finns play viciously fast hardcore with lots of tempo shifts, catchy guitar wanking, and burly vocals. YHTEIS KUNNAN YSTAVAT? employs the frantic pacing and snarling punk vocals that have become a trademark in Finnish hardcore, although I can't pinpoint any one band that might be their kindred spirit. Another great hardcore punk 7", how are you fools ever gonna keep up? (CI)
(Roku / Moshpart)

ZILEMMA – "Brave for Slave" CD

Old-school Japanese hardcore EP from these Nagoya City rockers. Only two tracks, which is a bummer if you are a fan of mid-tempo Japan hardcore, crew backing vocals, and gratuitous guitar leads. Like CITY INDIAN slowed down and covering later ROCKY AND THE SWEDEN. ZILEMMA's vocalist is from the seminal MENTAL DISEASE, and that gruff, yet melodic, and totally Japanese style transfers perfectly to the new band. The first song is slow and powerful, and the second raises the fist high for a classic Japanese hardcore rager. There are three videos





as well, making your CD purchase seem less frivolous…two good-quality live tunes and one studio track set to live footage. Mullets, make up, leather—it's all here!! (WN)
(MCR)

V/A – "DC-Jam Skate Rock" 2xCD

I have no idea what motivates this comp; I'm guessing it's in the spirit of the Thrasher *Skate Rock* comps, but it kinda looks like those janky *Punk-O-Rama* comps. Thing is, the track listing is rad…I mean, fuck, the BIG BOYS?? Worth the price of admission alone, and add to that GOVERNMENT ISSUE, JFA, SWINGIN' UTTERS, etc. and it's a good comp. Unfortunately, it's filled out with a bunch of shite. I don't get it? No info, no nuthin'. A few killer tracks, which can be found on said bands' legit reissues. I say skip it. (TB)
(DC-Jam)

V/A – "Killed by Trash 2" LP

This is the second installment of current international bands paying homage to punk bands of the 1980s. *Killed by Trash 2* rages with the likes of Canada's VICIOUS CYCLE covering THE AUTHORITIES, STATUES mimicking the Danish SODS, FUCKED UP covering the NUBS, and ANTI-YOU playing the CIRCLE JERKS. The record is held together with the familiarity of the tunes mixed with a refreshing vigor brought out by the excitement and punk fever of the current bands. On the one hand, this record showcases the abilities of current bands to twist and remake nostalgic punk gems of the past...and on the other, it's just rehashing past styles with a trashier feel. But overall, I'm digging what the bands on this comp have done with songs of the past. (DA)
(P. Trash)

V/A – "Laatiminen Äpäröille" LP

This classy compilation of newer Finnish hardcore is particularly notable for its large format and glossy text, which includes a concise history of early Finnish HC, as well as critical analysis of certain major bands and their defining styles. While it all makes for a fascinating read, the selection of recordings is quite strong: AIVOTTOMAT delivers a sharp mix, recalling TERVEET KÄDET's scorching vocals, while NOITUUS offers unbelievably trashy HC with the most minimal of live production values. Between these extremes, SOTATILA's rockin' approach and the distinctive humor of URBAN UNREST leave the strongest impression. Recommended! (SS)
(Wee Wee / Crapoulet)

V/A – "Mercy for None: A Hardcore Compilation" EP

It's been a while since I've gotten a hardcore compilation 7", at least one representing this side of hardcore. It has six bands on it, so I'll just do my best to keep up. This slab of vinyl starts off with an intro from KRS-ONE—I have no idea how this happened, but it is definitely bizarre and amazing. The first band here is NAYSAYER, from Richmond, VA. I was always hoping to use that name for a band someday—damn. Anyway, these guys play some tough NYHC-influenced stuff; it's OK but not outstanding. Next up are Pennsylvania's BAD SEED, playing in a similar style. After that, side one finishes up with ABSOLUTE MADNESS, a Cali band playing some pretty sick thrash metal. I liked it. Side two opens up with a Connecticut straight edge band called UNFORGIVEN; they're OK, they remind me a bit of CONVICTED, from Cleveland. Baltimore's BRICK follow; they're heavy as hell and pretty damned good. The record ends with LA's ALPHA & OMEGA, who plays apocalyptic rock-tinged tough hardcore and is fucking great. This record is definitely a mixed bag, but I'd probably buy a copy. I don't know the pressing info, but this one was on clear red vinyl. (VX)
(Reaper)

V/A – "New Kids on the Block" EP

New Kids on the Block is an unfortunate choice of a title for this EP. I know what they mean, but it manages to conjure up a different image than the one intended. This record features four amateurish punk bands: BAD SPORTS, DAY CREEPER, ERIC AND THE HAPPY THOUGHTS, and BRADFORD TROJAN. The songs are simplistic, catchy, and charming. BAD SPORTS and DAY CREEPER sound like distance cousins of the RAMONES with their off-key vocals and rudimentary tunes. ERIC AND THE HAPPY THOUGHTS deliver an extremely catchy, easily relatable song "Bad Days." BRADFORD TROJAN sounds like outsider music, but maybe a bit too normal. (CK)
(Randy)

V/A – "No. 1 Reason to Move to Gainesville" LP

Compilation of eleven Gainesville bands I've never heard before…or maybe reviewed on some split EP and since forgot about—it happens. Comps are a pain in the arse to review so bear with me. Here goes. THE SHAKING HANDS (actually I *have* heard and been impressed by these guys before) sound like a street-punk version of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS and are a nice way to kick things off. NO MORE has a catchy female-fronted MEASURE [SA] or LEMURIA thing going on. Good so far. CUTMAN is noisy and tough, but manages to avoid the usual template for burly post-hardbore. ANCHOR ARMS continues the racket, but with more of a traditional HC sound. THE JAMMY DODGERS bring things back to the poppy side of the fence and kind of sound like if the BEATNIK TERMITES were pre-pubescent girls. THE DAMN WRIGHTS are alt-country type shit…is this irony? Does it matter? This is *so* a few years ago… Side B: HOMETEAM does the title track and play cool upbeat melodic punk with girl vocals—I like it a lot, and it's very well done, though some may find them too '90s Fat Wrecky. DEAD FRIENDS is noisy angst, nothing wrong with that—I just have a sore head. NERVOUS DOGS also veers pretty close to the country border, but I like it as it has a beat and is closer to punk—like NOTHINGTON. LASERHEAD is the closest thing to what I was expecting from this record—that turn-of-the-century Gainesville/No Idea Records sound, albeit with a DINOSAUR JR influence. AVERKIOU closes things out, and they sound very college radio from the good old days—more DINOSAUR JR influence. Are the kids in Gainesville recording DINOSAUR JR over their older sibling's LEATHERFACE tapes??? Good comp—a few bands I would like to hear more from, and you can't ask for more than that really. (AD)
(No Idea)

V/A – "Rocky Mountain Low" 2xLP

A total knockout of a compilation. This double-LP is a loving documentation of the late-'70s Colorado underground/punk scene. Not all of the bands are gonna blow you away. A lot of the songs sound like they're straight-to-tape practice recordings (because they are). Still, for an area of the country generally under-represented in the annals of early punk history, *Rocky Mountain Low* is a treasure. Collectors, no doubt, know the DEFEX and maybe the RAVERS, but like any thriving scene there were plenty of bands around Colorado who never managed to put out a record. And like most scenes outside of the West and East Coasts, much of what passed as punk at the time sounds, to modern ears, more along the lines of killer, snarling, tough rock 'n' roll. Good enough for me! You get plenty of that here. The RAVERS kick off the compilation with their driving, stalker-like "Goddess of Love," plenty of low-end. DIRTY DOGS' "Sorority Girls" has the sneering vocals of punk, but a noodle-y, moody guitar solo smack in the middle of an otherwise brass-knuckle tough song. DANCING ASSHOLES brings up the simple / stripped down / political front, and RAVERS CORVAIRS give us "TV," a killer, punchy, power-poppish number with a searing, fuzzed-out surf-like guitar part. If you know your punk history I'm sure you'll be on the lookout for an appearance by Eric Boucher (a.k.a. Jello Biafra). He makes an appearance in a band called RAVERS HEALERS that generally noodled around in the experimental, improv direction. The HEALERS' John Greenway wrote the original lyrics to "California Über Alles" (reprinted in the included zine and an early HEALERS version of the song appears at the very end of the comp). DEFEX delivers standard (but great) KBD fare. The GUYS and PROFALACTICS pull up the girl/women band

front, with the TRANSISTORS doing an X-like guy/girl harmonizing vocal trade-off. Tons of bands, with each getting just two or three songs. Just enough. In addition to the two LPs of songs, there's a massive, full-color zine/booklet packed with dense text laying out the what's what on the history of Colorado's early punk scene. All in all, *Rocky Mountain Low* is not a record I'd pull out to listen to more than once every six weeks or so, but it's definitely something that's going in my collection. Top-notch work in putting this monster together. (IS)
(Hyperpyncal)

V/A – "Sweet Patches Compilation Number One" CD

Here's a comp CD from a label out of Cincinnati, OH. Most of the bands on here are Ohio bands, with the exceptions of one from Bangor, ME and one from Eugene, OR. I can't say any of these bands' names ring a bell. The bulk play hardcore that's derivative of early-'80s bands like BLACK FLAG, MINOR THREAT, or 7 SECONDS. The only ones that really stand out to me are CLAUSE 83, OVER RATED, and DEFECTIVE MALES. (BD)
(Sweet Patches)

V/A – "Streetpunk and Disorderly" 2xEP

The EXPLOITED *Troops of Tomorrow*-esque airbrushed cover would be enough to turn the casual buyer away, but as most true punks and skins know—the airbrushed cover usually hides some ripping tuneage. No letdown here, with a tremendous selection of some of the cream of the punx and skinz crop. It sounds like I'm taking the piss, but I love this shit—if it's done well it's fantastic drinking music. BAD CO. PROJECT is Sucker from OXYMORON's new thing and sounds pretty much like his old thing. The TOWER BLOCKS throw down a real rousing German streetpunk number. The ANALOGS from Poland are exactly the kind of thing I don't like about this genre…boring…no hooks…yawn. As always, our favorite anti-fascist Italians KLASSE KRIMINALE bring the hammer to finish up the first disc. MARCHING ORDERS from Australia is ruling—gang choruses galore with a COCKNEY REJECTS sneer. ALTERNATIVE ACTION is just too simplistic for me, but is probably the most traditional Oi! band on the comp, and they feature members of the SUBWAY THUGS for those keeping score. Locals HARRINGTON SAINTS have the NorCal skin sound down, and hints of the REDUCERS and WORKIN STIFFS are always good for these ears. Finally, SECRET ARMY sounds like early OXMORON…awesome. Seriously, this comp is *sooo* ruling. Ignore the cover, but if you are in the scene you probably expect it. Mike, where's the reviewer copy?? (TB)
(Longshot)

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Corleone: corleonerecords.com

Crapoulet: crapoulet.fr

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Crucial Response: Von-der-Mark Str. 31 / HH, 47137 Duisburg, GERMANY, crucialresponse.com

DC-Jam: 2733 E. Battlefield Rd #164, Springfield, MO 65804, dcjamrecords.com

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Depleted Resource: depletedresource.com

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Destesta: myspace.com/detesta

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Don Giovanni: PO Box 628, Kingston, NJ 08528, dongiovannirecords.com

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Drag City: P. O. Box 476867, Chicago, IL 60647, dragcity.com

Duck On Monkey: myspace.com/duckonmonkeyrecords

Dug Belan: 707 E Wright St., Milwaukee WI 53212

Elektrohasch Schallplatten: Postfach 900301, D-81503, Munchen, GERMANY, elektrohasch.de

Family Night: familynightrecords.com

Fat Wreck Chords: PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, fatwreck.com

Flying Peluca: Macky Chuca, C/Hereu 34 4art C, 07014 Palma de Mallorca, Illes Balears, SPAIN, mostros.info/flyingpeluca.html

Free Cake: 15 Pudding Stone Lane, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438, freecakefreecake.com

Friday Night Kids: fridaynightkids.wz.cz

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Heartbreak Stereo: heartbreakstereo.com

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H:G Fact: interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact

Hipsville: 2591 South Meade Street, Denver, CO 80219, hipsville-records.com

Hoehnie: An der Kuhtränke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY, hoehnie-records.de

House Party: 2629 Connolly St, Halifax, NS B3L 3M4, CANADA, housepartyrecords.ca

Humdinger: 38 Mulberry Street, Asheville, NC 28804, humdingerrecords.com

Hyperpyncal: rockymountainlow.com

In Crust We Thrash: incrustwethrash@yahoo.co.jp

Insane Society: PO Box 18, 504 01 Novy Bydzov, CZECH REPUBLIC, insanesociety.net

Instigate: instigaterecords.com

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KOP: myspace.com/kingbillshankley

Kranium: krnm.se

Lengua Armada: martincrudo@yahoo.com

Like Rats: 610 Cambridge Street, Allston, MA 02134

Longshot: 980 Harrison St, San Francisco, CA 94107, myspace.com/longshotmusic

Lucky Scars: myspace.com/luckyscars

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Moo Cow: 38 Larch Circle, Belmont MA 02478

Moshpart: moshpart@gmail.com

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Residue: residue-records.com

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Slovenly: PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, slovenly.com

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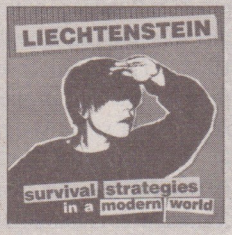

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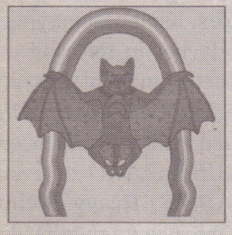

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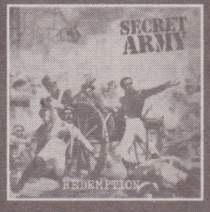

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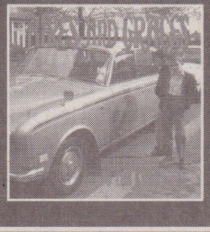

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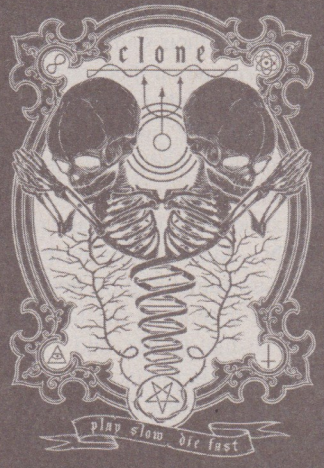

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DEMOS

Send demo tapes and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Diane Anastasio, Helen Degenerate, Layla Gibbon, Dan Goetz, Cissie Scurlock, Vinnie LaRussa and XyosefX

AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER – These Georgia kids had their 7" reviewed in these pages fairly recently I believe. While I liked it, I enjoyed this live tape (entitled *Crust Never Sleeps*) more. Think early 9 SHOCKS TERROR meets a less epic version of THE HOLY MOUNTAIN. Good, fairly fast, crusty-ish hardcore with spastic stop/start parts and gravelly vocals. Worth getting. Song titles might be nice though. (xYosefx) (???-song cassette, no lyrics included, $4.50 ppd from Vinyl Rites, PO Box 924, Gainesville, FL 32602, vinylrites.net)

ANARENE – Fast Texan trio with driving (driving?) lead guitar, appropriate and skilled rhythm & percussion, and lyrics that make it easier for me to relate to them and not think they're some typical HC buffoons that bitch about being alienated by the government and their dads but have no introspective critique on their own oppressive behavior. When both vocalists are singin', sounds like BLATZ but the music is a lot more complicated and, shall I say innovative? exciting? tight? (Helen) (7-song CD, no lyrics, xboogdishx@hotmail.com)

AURYN – Man, I really wish that when folks released something on both CDR and cassette they'd send us the tape version. I just really dislike CDRs, and I really love tapes. Plus, this is pretty good so it would be nice to have a copy that feels more *real*. Anyway, AURYN hail from the wastelands of Pittsburgh, PA, and they play some gloomy melodic crustcore with screamo influences. This reminds me of what REQUIEM sounded like before they recorded the LP. Lyrics are apocalyptic and explicitly anarchist and get a thumbs up on both counts. Recommended. If you order one, the tape is the same cost as this CDR... (xYosefx) (4-song CDR, lyrics included, $3 ppd from Kyle F./Auryn, PO Box 10223, Pittsburgh, PA 15232, aurypgh@gmail.com)

BACKSLIDER – This type says "Skull-fracturing Fastcore" down the spine, so I entered with some pretty high expectations. I'm happy to say I wasn't disappointed. Quality thrash/powerviolence heavily influenced by LACK OF INTEREST, which can't be a bad thing. This actually reminds me a lot of UZI SUICIDE, who were one of the most crucial bands of recent years. Pretty good pissed lyrics too. I'd like to hear them with a better recording, but this is a fucking demo tape so what should I be expecting, the fucking White Album? (xYosefx) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, $3 ppd from Backslider c/o Patrick Forrest, 550 Pearl St. Apt 303, Reading, PA 19602, myspace.com/bsfastcore)

D-CLONE / ISTERISMO – split – The songs on this tape were recorded live. Both bands sound more blown out and crazier than on their proper recordings—we're talking an almost GLOOM tier of intensity here. The levels are vastly beyond red and you have to strain to find any sense of song structure, but the energy level is inspiring, especially on the D-CLONE tracks—a glorious mass of noise, screaming, and deafening instrumentation. This is a cool document of two of Japan's best current bands, and I will keep listening to it even though it kind of hurts. (Cissie)(15-song cassette, no lyrics included, c/o Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang, Malaysia, blacxseeds@yahoo.co.uk)

DEAD FRIENDS – Another live tape of another killer hardcore band from our friends at Vinyl Rites. DEAD FRIENDS jumped on a show at Gilman not long ago and I have to say I was pretty blown away. I picked up their CD and it was good but not as good as their live show. This live tape (it's called *How Young is Too Young?)* definitely captures the energy the studio stuff was missing, it's a total fucking rager. Fast thrashy hardcore with interesting song structures, this reminds me of a more stripped down version of fellow Floridians COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN mixed with some pop punk influences. That might sound shitty, but it definitely isn't. (xYosefx) (???-song cassette, no lyrics included, $4.50 ppd from Vinyl Rites, PO Box 924, Gainesville, FL 32602, vinylrites.net)

DEATHAMPHETAMINE - This is definitely the most metal-sounding shit I've plucked from the review bin thus far. Straight up death metal with a strong grindcore and crust influence, with cover art showing mutants duking it out amidst toxic waste. Heavy. This is good stuff, and the lyrics are pretty right on as well, anti-capitalist and political in some songs and straight science fiction in others. I like it, maybe you will too. (xYosefx) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, Jonathan P. Galanis, 19 Main Street Apt. 8, Easthampton, MA 01027)

DIET COKEHEADS – OK, Vinyl Rites is an awesome label putting out great shit, but it would be nice if they'd include lyrics with some of these tapes. Kind of annoying, really. This is definitely not in the vein of what I've come to expect from them- instead of fast crusty hardcore, DIET COKEHEADS play noisy, art-damaged AmRep-influenced sludge rock a la JESUS LIZARD or even MADE OUT OF BABIES. Heavy, weird and awesome. I think this one might already be out of print by the time this issue goes to press, so check the website before ordering. If you see one somewhere, buy it, you won't be sorry. (xYosefx) (???-song cassette, no lyrics included, $4.50 ppd from Vinyl Rites, PO Box 924, Gainesville, FL 32602, vinylrites.net)

FIGHT BACK – This Croatian band plays crusty punk that channels the usual suspects, but the thinness of the recording and the speed and prominence of the bass picking (which also rattles at times, presumably due to the downtuning) gives it as much of a UK punk feeling as a crusty hardcore one. All this adds somewhat of a cool musical aesthetic, and the riffs are far more inventive than usual. One of the vocalists is a growler, the other is a shrieker, and they of course trade off. (Dan) (28-song cassette, lyrics included, Doomed To Exinction Records c/o CAPS, PO Box 22449, Oakland, CA 94609, ab_useyu@yahoo.co.uk)

FUZZKILL – Congratulations, Minneapolis, there hasn't been a bad band (at least that I've heard) come out of your swollen punk hips. I challenge anyone to defy me. Super fast, super dirty, gettin the job done

MPLS punk rock, Thank you. (Helen) (9-song cassette, w/lyrics, Rathole, 2643 Cedar Ave. S, MPLS, MN 55404)

GIFT HORSE – I think I burned out on pop punk after all the demos last issue. This is some positive, extra-poppy, danceable punk rock. If you were at the PINHEAD GUNPOWDER show last year at Gilman then you want this. The copy I'm holding is numbered 10/52, so you might want to jump on it. (xYosefx) (6-song CDR, lyrics included, Jonathan P. Galanis, 19 Main Street Apt. 8, Easthampton, MA 01027)

THE MUCK MUCKS – WRANGLER BRUTES meet THE RESIDENTS in this German trio. Dark synthesis of the ever-dominant European techno culture into their pleasantly simple (and accurate) version of rock and roll. Super refreshing and weird synth-punk, with pitched-shifted and fuzzed-out vocals (think SCREAMERS). Excellent musicianship, instrumental songs being in the mellow vein along the lines of ESG. Best demo of the month. Highly recommended, (29-song cassette, no lyrics, WALL OF TAPECLICK RECORDINGS c/o Philip Schulz, Gr. Scharnorst 5, 21465 Reinbek, Germany)

PERDITION – Extremely well recorded standard hardcore with very metal lyrics about blood and Satan's dark night and this and that. I have one unique thought for this band: there's about a hundred bands called PERDITION. Why? (Helen) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, Ian Graye 48-53 44thst. Apt. c Queens, NY, 11377)

R/N – Excellent Chicago-style punk. Scathing vocals that are at the same time bratty and insanely violent. Fast and short and mean. Just like everything else in Chicago. (Helen) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, rawnervemusic@gmail.com)

ROGER MORTIS - The recording job on this demo is somwhere between BROADWAY's demo and VLAD TEPES' album. By this I mean that the recording is terrible, but makes the songs sound super dark and energetic. Standard crust drumming, pleasant dissonant guitar, nice bass breaks reminding me of something folks who love AMEBIX would make sure they included in their songs. (Helen) (5-song CD, lyrics included, roger.mortis@yahoo.com)

RUMOURS – This tape is awesome and I just keep playing it over and over and over again. I'm sensing an early '80s hardcore vibe here á la MINOR THREAT, but with a current spin of simplicity thrown into the mix. These Canadians are keeping it simple by playing straight-up, mid-tempo, raging, catchy hardcore at its finest, with an occasional gang vocal and sound clip included. Keep an eye out for this band. (Diane) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, $5, julsgeneric@hotmail.com)

SECRET SERVICE – When I think about Albany punx, the first thing that comes to mind is naked people, and insane parties. This demo furthers that tradition with the band photo on the lyric sheet; the amount of props and costumes displayed would usually make me write 'em off as wacky art school jerks if I had not listened to it first. Some intensely great early SF style punk with *raging* lady vocals, seriously somewhere between Penelope Houston and BLATZ! The music is one-two-FU style punk, done with the appropriate levels of snot and smarts, and the lyrics are perceptive, thoughtful and ridiculously punk at the same time. I bet this band is awesome live, and I would love to see them play a house party sometime. (Layla) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, xhitgirlx@gmail.com

SHARDS – Fuck, this is good. It's totally dark in a first-record-TSOL way and the vocalist drags his words in the same way Darby Crash did. I mean none of that in a retro way either. This Raleigh, NC band has the chops and the legs for many listens. (Justin) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included. Sorry State, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

SUDOR – This demo is aces. Totally raw DISCHARGE-influenced hardcore. Just the way I like it. If you're a fan of any other current inept Spanish hardcore like INFIERNO DE COBARDES or FIRMEZA 10, I highly urge checking out SUDOR too. (Justin) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, 3 euro ppd, Solo Para Punks, c/o Jorge Moreno, Apdo. 1030, 28905 Getafe, SPAIN, jorge@radioruido.com)

TRAMPS – Damn, there are some real treats in this month's demos. This Atlanta, GA band starts straight up ripping at the first note and just go for it. Fast angry not-a-throwback hardcore from start to finish. Nasty vocals, pounding drums, burly riffs, and thunderous bass…it's all here. (Justin) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included. Sorry State, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

UNIDENTIFIED DRUNKEN INJURY – These high-energy, scummy songs fall somewhere between GRIMPLE and TOXIC NARCOTIC, and would likely induce circle pits among dirty, drunken punk kids with studded leather and little to lose. (Dan) (15-song CD, no lyrics included, evilratt@hotmail.com)

WITCHES – Even more music from the fine folks at Vinyl Rites, and they're throwing me for a loop once again. WITCHES play indie rock with sung female vocals, a little tiny bit of punk influence but definitely not punk rock or hardcore. Melody and prettiness with a touch of melancholy. Not really my thing, and I don't really know what to compare them to. There's only 100 of these out there, though, so it seems like everyone who winds up with one will probably be someone who digs it. Except me. Oh, this collects a 7" and some otherwise unreleased material. (xYosefx) (???-song cassette, no lyrics included, $4.50 ppd from Vinyl Rites, PO Box 924, Gainesville, FL 32602, vinylrites.net)

WIZZARD SLEEVE – Dizzying anthemic punk marches from deep south. Only a two-and-a-half hour drive from my home town, these folks continue to rip. Psychedelic and complicated, WS would be a great fit at a PUNFEST show featuring TRICLOPS, STRIPMALLSEIZURES, and the dearly departed THE CARS THE DOORS. (Helen) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, myspace.com/wizzardsleeve)

YELLOW EYES – Dirt dusted, low-end dwelling hardcore from the Bay Area, and YELLOW EYES plays hardcore with a local approach. That means that there's lots of brooding breaks and buildups, the vocals are deep and gravelly, and the songs contain an underlying heaviness without making obvious metal nods. This is a great demo, even though it's a bit on the lo-fi side. Hell, maybe it's good 'cos it's on the lo-fi side. If you clean it up, it might be metallic hardcore. Just kidding. On this tape YELLOW EYES plays nine songs of ugly, dirty, raw hardcore of the best sort. And the fuckers had to break up, argh! (Cissie) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, yeyes@irukandjirecords.com)

ZOMBIE DOGS – Really raw and rudimentary, (in the best sense of the word), all-lady-made hardcore from Brooklyn. It comes with this rad lyric book/tape cover, with songs about creepy feminist for fucks dudes, street harrassment and skateboarding! It's so refreshing hearing challenging, thoughtful feminist *and* goofy lyrics in this genre of hardcore. So rad!! Tamara has the coolest voice, it's really tough sounding but not in a SPITBOY way, more like a more hardcore Jenna from MIKA MIKO? She has a similar cool throaty/ snotty thing, but this is way more aggro! The guitar sound is so blown out, and listening to this just makes me think of the endless eternal sound of basement hardcore bands. It's a good feeling listening to a tape on which the riffs bring to mind *Flex Your Head,* but girls made it, so much cooler than another generi-dude band. (Layla) (4 Song cassette, lyrics included, 538 Johnson Ave #203, Brooklyn, NY 11237, zombiedoggies@gmail. com, myspace.com/zombiedogsnyc)

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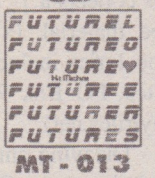

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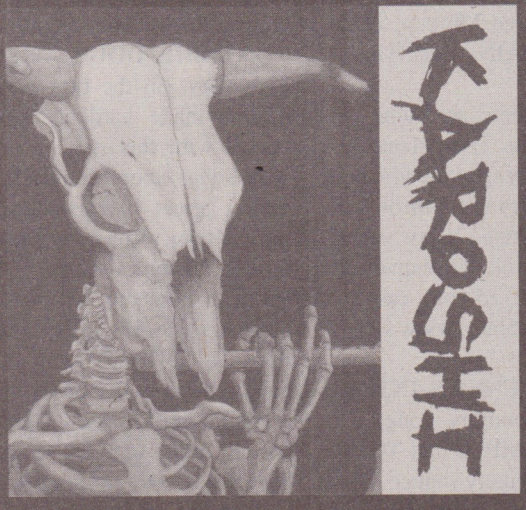

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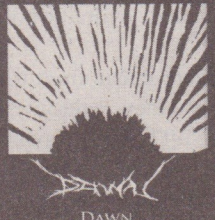
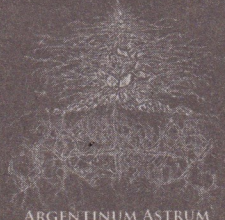


DAWN



ARGENTINUM ASTRUM +MORE

ANTI CORPORATE MUSIC INC.

PO BOX 190339
NASHVILLE, TN
37219

ZINES

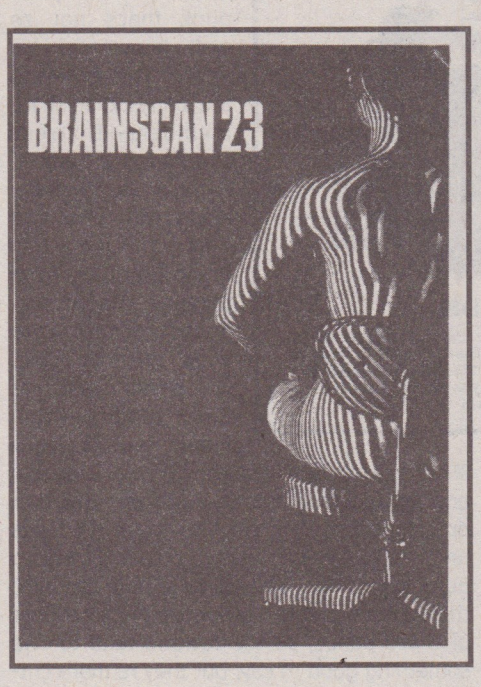
Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(DA) Diane Anastasio
(JD) Judy Balmin
(BB) Brace Belden
(JB) Julia Booze
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(DG) Dan Goetz
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(JM) Jeff Mason
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens
(VX) XYosefX

BAITLINE #1 / free
8.5 x 11 copied – 8 pgs
Classified advertising seems to be on the wind right now as punks, in an effort to pool resources reach outward, searching for others to share ideas and opportunities with. *Baitline* was put out by a favorite zinemaker friend, responsible for riveting classics like *Those Fucking Unicorns* and *Kickboxing Beatdown* etc. *Baitline* is not a comic of a sexual nature like you might expect, rather an advertiser, actively seeking submissions in the form of your burnt offerings. Have you a skill to share? Are you seeking helpers on your organic farm or are you available for hire? Perhaps you have items to sling, give good happy endings, want a date, or have an imaginary err to air... you get the picture? There is no telling what you might catch when you drag in a *Baitline*. (DS)
Baitline / 70 Richland / San Francisco, CA 94110
sywagon@gmail.com

BRAINSCAN #23 / $2
4 x 7 – copied – 40 pgs
Brainscan is an institution in the world of personal zines at this point, and Alex Wrekk has been holding it down with her narrative writing style and her distinctive cut-and-paste aesthetic for years and years from the depths of her Portland bunker. I guess I haven't read this zine since probably about issue #8, but from what I can remember, it doesn't seem like Alex has led this publication too far astray from what it once was. This one's theme is "travel stories that never quite went as far as the travel written about," with each story representing a different time and place in Alex's life and featuring an ever-changing cast of characters. She covers everything from awkward situations in bars, to the ups and downs of nation-wide zine tours, to fleeting romances on family vacations. The travel theme makes for a more cohesive collection of writings and I'm psyched that *Brainscan* is going strong. (DA)
Brainscan Zine / PO Box 17230 / Portland, OR 97217-0230

BRUTALLY OBCSENE #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
I have a soft spot for zines like *Brutally Obscene*. It's short and sweet and every page is filled with interviews and reviews of bands that the author has a genuine interest in. Even though I rarely share taste in music with Nick I appreciate that he's channeled his interests into a zine. In addition to interviews with Stza Crack (yawn) and Voetsek and a



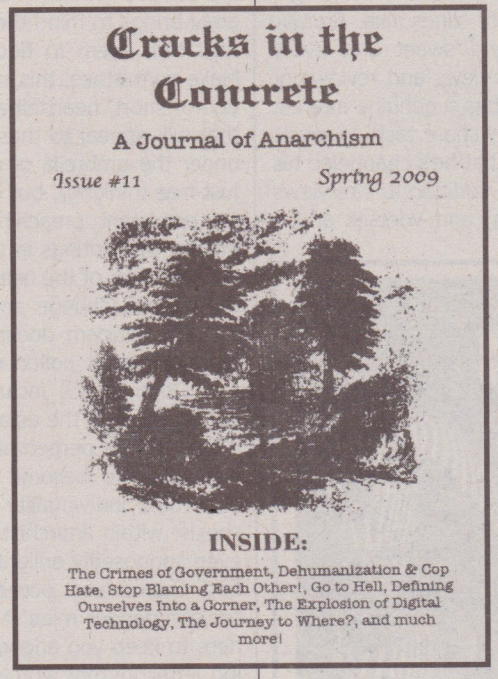
brief autobiography of El Grita, Nick's penned a few rants, reviewed a slew of records, and offered some retarded punk art (definitely a plus). Overall *Brutally Obscene* is standard fare for a hardcore/grindcore music zine, and it's a well-done first effort. (CI)
brutallyobscene@gmail.com

CRACKS IN THE CONCRETE #11 / free or donation
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 52 pgs
Now here is a zine that is a pleasure to read from cover to cover, which is amazing since the subtitle *A Journal of Anarchism* immediately brings to mind the monotonous activist rags that seem to flood the mailbox here. Make no mistake, this is a well written collection of short, heartfelt and thoughtful essays that will appeal to those who ponder issues under the umbrella of anarchist thought (or just free thinking), but don't necessarily care for persistent preaching and sloganeering. Among the writings in this issue is a reasonable criticism of the belief that Obama will be the desired change some people hope for, but the criticism doesn't fall into simplistic ranting against politicians, which is refreshing. Other topics include how our society, largely through the establishment of religion, is based on a perpetuated fear that compels individuals to become part of the system; also, how individuality and community can coexist within anarchist philosophy, and how even supposedly enlightened people can still find themselves occasionally playing into societal gender roles. And there's a lot more here to keep you engaged, from an interesting letter/journal written by an incarcerated activist regarding women prisoners, to an installment of an autobiography written by a man who fled normal life in the 1960s (but we're only teased with an introduction and have to wait until next issue to find out more). This is a great read, and it's free, too, but I would encourage you send a buck or two as a donation. (BG)
Luke Romano / PO Box 2748 / Tucson, AZ 85702
cracksintheconcrete@gmail.com

CRAMHOLE #3 / $3 ppd
8.5 x 7 – printed – 36 pgs
Cramhole, a collection of comics from five artists, is a fairly strong effort that looks

improved over its last issue. Amy Shapiro and Billups Allen make up the majority of the work, mainly centered on the daily lives of the artists with the usual fare of record stores, relationships, and other mild diversions. The piece celebrating aging punks was the highlight because, yes, there is nothing more embarrassing than the 45 year-old fellar with pink hair and bondage pants buying a 36-pack of toilet paper at Target. Well done and getting better. (CR)
Billups Allen / 2244 E. 17th Street / Tucson, AZ 85719

DENY EVERYTHING #5 / $2 ppd
8.5 x 11.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Writings on the wall stinkpuss—*Distort* actually exists, it is a real magazine, a self-published Austrian/tralian (can't remember which, Daniel's accent is too thick to understand and I'm embarrassed to ask him if he's from Europe or if he's a Pommie [Prisoner of Her Majesty]). Anyways, *Deny Everything* is *exactly* like *Distort*, down to everything. Everything. Everything. But, I like this zine. But for real man, let's get serious with each other, you gotta break out dog. You gotta get up on your own two legs and kick ol' DX to the bottom of the lowest pit in Perth and toss your cock on your shoulder and say "*Fuck dry rot because they are Christians and they sound like* Dark Side of the Moon." Plus they were condescending to you in the interview, and c'mon they're just trying to be weird with that eugenics crap, race science is bunk science, and Dry Rot is a bunk band. But your writing ain't shit, let's just shoot for originality (I say let's because I bought three shares in your magazines future). (BB)
82 George St. / Thebarton / S.A. 5031 Australia



DOLL #262 / $?
7.25 x 10 – printed – 120 pgs – Japanese
I wonder how *Doll* is perceived by people that can actually read it. I always flip through and find a couple things that I'd like to check out. If I could decipher the Deadless Muss interview in this issue I'd certainly read it, but I have to admit that the rest of the material here seemed kind of lackluster. There's some sort of grind retrospective, with Napalm Death and Brutal Truth interviews and then there's a New York hardcore feature with Billy Club Sandwich (band name is fo' real) and Dead City. Later on there's features/interviews with Pinhead Gunpowder, Aggressive Dogs, Obliteration Records, Star Club, etc, and as usual there's lots of reviews, as well as the always enjoyable "Jap's Front Line" section. None of this matters unless you can read Japanese characters or you just really enjoy staring at photos of the bands mentioned, and I like looking at photos a lot, so I usually find myself entertained by *Doll*—I just happen to not like most of the bands featured this month... (CI)
Doll / No. 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9, Kita / Kohenji, Suginami-Ku / Tokyo, Japan
www.doll-mag.co.jp

DRUNK NACH OSTEN #1 / $3 US + postage
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 44 pgs
The name (I was pretty proud to understand a [good] joke in German) is indicative of the contents. *Drunk Nach Osten* is out of Brno, Czech and focuses on Eastern European punk that's not so well known in his locale. Interviewed are bands that share members—Distress and Komatoz from St. Petersburg, Russia, along with FPO and This Home Is Prepared from Skopje, Macedonia. These interviews are long and detailed, well done. There are tour reports from Kurwa Aparata and a short trip to Romania from Festa Deserato and Riposta, but these are not very in-depth or compelling. The reviews focus on tapes and CDs/CD-Rs from newer Eastern European bands. The editor says in the intro that he's a promoter as opposed to a critiquer of these bands, so the reviews tend to find something good to say, but they're more critical than many shitty music reviews I've read. There are a number of pages of lyrics and photos as well. What got me super-excited, though, was the translation into English of two chapters of a book, "Kytary A Rev Aneb Co Bylozazdi," on Czech punk before the revolution ('89). I don't know where else you're gonna find this material. The bands Extempore, Energie G, and Zikkurat get the most attention, as many of the other bands have left little or nothing in the way of historical record. Of course there is a lot of talk of the state repression the bands operated under, including reports from the Public Peace Protection Commission about the "bad educational effect on the youth present" at the shows. There is an interview, taken off the internet, with the old Greek band, Adiexodo. It was done many years after the demise of the band, but unlike old US/UK bands, I think it would be quite hard to find zine interviews available from the time. And finally the zine comes with a 37-track, 27 band CDR, featuring songs from every band mentioned above, and many others mentioned or reviewed in the zine. Only one song totally sucks (sorry, Aku) and none are unlistenable due to sound quality. Adiexodo is almost a straight rip of Joy Division, but the anger and pain in the vocals as he sings of a teenaged anarchist murdered by cops makes them well worth hearing. Komatoz, Aktivna Propaganda, and Zikkurat also stand out, but overall it is a strong comp. Future issues will include more translations from the Czech punk book. Thank you, Paaya, for your work on this zine. I fucking love it. (JM)
Pavel Hrubes / Milady Horakove 14 / 602 00 / Brno / Czech Republic
paaya.ds@seznam.cz

FAT GRRRLZ! #1 & #2 / $2 USA, $3 world
5.5 X 8.5 – copied –18 pgs
This is totally anal and nit-picky, but I really hate when 5 x 8 zines aren't bound together in some way, it just says lazy to me. I mean, take the time to make a different colored cover, but don't bother to staple it? How fucking hard is it to put a rubber band around the crease? Anyway, this is a radical response to anti-fat culture. The interviews are pretty interesting. I enjoyed #2 more than the first one. The first one gets too caught up in that "fuck you! this is who I am and yr gonna like it!" type rhetoric. The second one goes more into critical analysis of societal norms and such but still stays pretty superficial. Hopefully this girl continues on the path she's going down and *Fat Grrrlz* #5 is going to be really fucking good. (MM)
Brandi Lee / PO box 1568 / New York, NY 10276

HANgOVER #2 / $3ppd, trades accepted
6.25 x 8.5 – copied – 34 pgs
HANgOVER seems to be trying really hard to keep the scene in Hannover, PA together. You can sense that there are so few punks there that a really mish-mashed group of people with different tastes in music and different values are coming together to make this zine. In some instances, those circumstances make a scene stronger because one has to

find common ground instead of having really insular groups that only hang out with like-minded people. Sometimes though, it makes for a zine that is right on in spots and ridiculously offensive and worthless in others. My beef is that it is the women who are being really misogynist and judgmental. I guess I am lucky I come from a scene big enough so I don't have to hang out with self-hating girls that think like this. They fucking suck completely, and their writing is downright counter-revolutionary. Good luck with that. However, like I said, there are a lot of different voices represented. For one thing, there are some simple instructions for DIY wine making and a good argument for *why* DIY, and some writing on violence which is poorly thought out or maybe just hurried but still provocative, and a decent set of instructions for software piracy that is definitely useful for people like me who are scared of the FBI. From the Rural Subversion Tactics piece, I can tell there is a main voice, or thread, through out the pages that is really bottom-lining the thing, who seems to "get it". But to find that voice I still have to schlub through things like a diatribe against obesity and a general dismissal of all bands that have women in them, and a weak-ass list of punk themed movies that actually leaves out *Airheads* but disses *Rock 'n' Roll High School*. See *Born in Flames*, then we'll talk. (JB)
PunkHäus Distro / 13 Wirt Ave. / Hanover, PA 17331
http://www.punkhaus.wordpress.com

HOT SHOWER #9 / $2.75 ppd. Trades yes
5.5 x 8 – copied – 18 pgs
Hot Shower features *sexy drawings*, hoots, hoots hooters, self-fingerblasting, buhbuh-buhblowjobs, and some disparate form of plot! *Who* can say what is going on here? I for one cannot. Is this funny? I was amused. I jerked off to it! I jerk off to a hell of a lot of things, including Jello Biafra's MySpace page (I thought it was my dog's). I also jacked off to the leggings section of the *Plastic Bomb* catalogue. Weird world, huh? (BB)
6420 Peardae Rd E / Colombus, OH 43229
hotshowercomics@gmail.com / joshuaisaac@gmail.com

HLUBOKA ORBA #27 / $6 plus postage
11.75 x 8.25 – printed – 200 pgs – Czech
That's right, 200 pages! This thing is a freakin' monster. You could physically defend yourself from thugs and cops with this small phonebook-sized "zine", and then enjoy yourself for weeks reading lengthy tour diaries (for several bands such as See You In Hell and Disney), long interviews (with bands Prumyslove Smrti, Active Minds, and Germ Attak, among others), loads of articles, reviews, and many columns from contributors. There are only a couple of small ads throughout this beast, and hardly any wasted space. The photos alone make this worth looking at, and that brings me to the only barrier from absolutely recommending this to all of you: it's written in the Czech language so you might just have to look at the photos alone! Fuck! There's enough here to keep you occupied for a month, at least (and I think *Hluboka Orba* only comes out like once or twice a year anyway). It's put together by one of the dudes in See You In Hell, and I think sometimes he puts out a version in English. Write to him and pester him to do so! (BG)
Filip Fuchs / Grohova 39 / 602 00 Brno / Czech Republic
orba@seznam.cz

THE LAST MARRIED MAN WINS / $1
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 15 pgs
I like little comic books like this one, because when drawings are this bad, there's something inherently obscene about them. I guess that's because usually there's going to be some gruesome, reptilian something going on. Maybe some exposed genitals or a beheading or a sex act. This particular book is no disappointment.
It contains one panel, one-two, ya-ta-ta type jokes mostly dealing with the topic of sexual relations or lack thereof between the sexes. The reoccurring character is the pathetic dude in the bar getting shot down. Maybe "jokes" is the wrong word. It's not really funny. But it has an outsider appeal to it. Or a my-ten-year-old-brother-made-this appeal to it. (JD)
Freddy Joe / PO Box 345 / Putney, Vermont 05346

LITMUS TEST #1 /
no price listed, $3?
8.5 x 11 - photocopied - 52 pgs
Litmus Test is an unabashedly straight edge zine. If you're not either straight edge or into straight edge hardcore, you might want to just skip to the next review, as this zine will probably hold nothing for you. I think I have a pretty good idea why this was given to me to review... The most important thing you need to know about *Litmus Test* is that there is an interview with Greg Bennick in it. Greg Bennick sang for Trial, easily my favorite hardcore band of all time, and is a witty, insightful and charming gentleman, even if he did unashamedly vote in the last election. I've never read an interview with the man that was less than totally great, so I won't bother to try to encapsulate it for you. The zine also includes interviews with Ceremony, Dave Brown (who put out the *Adult Crash* hardcore photobook), Pulling Teeth, Ross Haenfler (author or *Straight Edge: Clean Living Youth, Hardcore Punk and Social Change*) and a kid working on a straight edge photo project. The interviews, as well as the other bits of writing throughout, tend to focus on straight edge, veg(etari)anism and politics. If *Litmus Test* had come out ten years ago it would be trite and cliché, but it's been a long time since straight edge was cool so it's nice to see something like this every once in a while. I dig it. (VX)
McDaniel / 104 N. Harvie St. Apt. 2 / Richmond, VA 23220
joshnojob@gmail.com

LOSERDOM #19 / $4 or 2.50 Euros
6.25 x 8 – printed – 36 pgs
Loserdom is as always a great representation of the community and sense of adventure that punk has to offer. Anto and Eugene detail their trip to Vancouver, a pretty typical zine style travel diary, but because the way they write about their endeavors exemplifies the cliché "the personal is political" in an earnest yet interesting manner, it's a really refreshing read somehow. They sort of interrogate and analyze everything they encounter—rather than just remarking on what a killer show the Distort Vancouver fest was, upon realizing that every band playing was all male, they ask where the girls were... There's an interview with Roisín Boyd of the Irish Refugee Council, an advocacy group for asylum seekers based in Ireland, which details the difficulties that immigrants face and what they do to counter them. The Irish system, though problematic, seems a lot less barbaric than in the US or British, where asylum seekers who are often escaping persecution and torture, have to endure jail like conditions. There's also an interview with the Irish hardcore band, Only Fumes and Corpses, and the usual *Loserdom* bike related spiels. An endearing snapshot of the cool and politically engaged Irish punk community. (LG)
loserdomzine@gmail.com

MAP OF FOG #1 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
This is a pretty interesting local San Francisco zine, (if you couldn't tell by the title). I started reading *Map of Fog* after being in a car for twelve hours and driving over "Jump Off Joe Creek" in Northern California, which was more than appropriate, considering the subject matter of the first story concerns suicide by leaping from the heights of the downtown Hyatt. This story is followed by a recounting of the author's experiences on mushrooms and, at the end of the zine, my favorite part, is a secret guide to one of San Francisco's most underrated neighborhoods, The Sunset. Overall, I'm impressed with Marcos' writing style and his ability to keep my interest even while telling drug stories, which make me want to cringe 99% of the time. (DA)
Marcos Soriano / PO Box 27252 / San Francisco, CA 94127

NODE PAJOMO SPRING 2009 / $1
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 18 pgs
It took me most of my whole life to figure out what *Node Pajomo* is about. It's a list of mail art projects and contacts for them. The author is hoping to construct a network of mail art "nodes" in a similar way that some people did in the '90s with a zine called *Global Mail*. There's also a section called "antistamps" in which the author explains what antistamps are, (an artwork of your own creation designed to look like a stamp) and how to make them. Even though the text is hard to read on the busy collage background, it's funny and I'm definitely intrigued to peer further into this world of mail art projects. (JD)
PO Box 2632 / Bellingham, WA 98227
nodepajomo@gmail.com

NUTS #2 / $2 ppd or trade
11 x 17 – printed – 6 pgs
OK, so first of all reading this was kind of bizarre 'cuz it's an Olympia zine and I used to live there, but that was a while ago, so it was a lot of like, "Oh yeah I remember that girl" and "Do I know that dude?" and "Is that my old house?" It was like reading a zine entirely about your acquaintances and that guy you see around town all the time. Besides that, which wasn't really a problem, just kind of weird, I really dug this. The interviews (with Broken Strings and Sex Vid) are long but not boring, and instead really thorough, and they manage to be really interesting, like intellectual, not just dumb dude-bro-ing down. There're drawings and pictures and absurd narratives that seem randomly dropped in that are weird and fascinating, but work well with everything. And usually I get annoyed with the big format thing because it makes it so you can't read it anywhere, or read it secretly, but really if this was 5 x 8 it would be kind of disappointing, so I'm glad it's huge. All and all, I'd say yes. (MM)
BCT / PO Box 7302 / Olympia, WA 98507

PLACEBO JANE #5 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied –36 pgs
There are bike accident horror stories, an article on a trip to the UK that resulted in lots of trash TV but no Undertones 7"s (I coulda told you where to get those Meredith!), interviews with Oakland's own Streeteaters and Cycloptypus, who are apparently "mega righteous dudes." Plus a creepy found diary detailing the difficulties of being a born again Christian who has sexual needs dammit! This is a collection of random things, in the classic zine tradition, with a sarcastic yet psyched narrative style. (LG)
PO Box 7613 / Berkeley CA 94707

PLASTIC BOMB #66 / 3.50 euros
8x11 – printed – 77 pgs – German
Newsflash big-dick: *Plastic Bomb* makes Tragedy *polos*. I used to be in a band, you know, semi-famous and even once in this very *Max*-mag! Open my mouth with your fingers then take a shit, we put out three records, *three,* which is more than Tragedy has ever done—and they get a bootleg fucking polo? Yannick is sixty-seven and fathered seven children before he was fifteen. Yannick is in Tragedy, by the way, and because of this, he gets to have some German schlubs make his band (marketing concept) logo into a work-acceptable and (might I say) stylish shirt design? Whatever, man, "y'all" is fucking pussies. Warkrime signed a deal with Affliction (I didn't know what it was either, but it's those all-over print shirts that girls and young men in Park Merced wear) and now we're gonna be (posthumously) fucking famous, so suck-my-dick. (BB)
micha@plastic-bomb.de

RADIATION SICKNESS #4 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
The cover makes this seem borderline metal, as the title is written so gnarly it has to be reprinted underneath. And I think that's Snake from Voivod underneath. But inside (and the rant starting on the cover) is all hardcore punk. After the brief denunciation of this rotten system, we are treated to talks with Germ Attak, Steve from *Ripping Thrash* zine, Al from *Suburban Voice* (and of course *MRR*), and Finnish thrashers Omaisuus Vahinko. These interviews are well done and are complimented by photos and flyers. There are no reviews or ads. This is a good effort and worth the cash. (JM)
Jim Finlayson / 3506 N Borthwick / Portland, OR 97227

RIPPING THRASH #25 / 1 pound, 1.5 pound distro
5 x 8.5 – copied–46 pgs
This music review zine that spawned from the label and distro of the same name is well organized and has a lot of heart. The layout and interviews appear to be done meticulously and with a lot of care, and the graphics are clean. There are plenty of zine and record reviews, and interviews with Japan's NK6 and Norway's hardcore band Vi Gruer Oss. I especially enjoyed the section on zombie movies—a general but informative overview of some of the most ridiculous and gratuitously violent genres. (MJ)
Steve / P.O. Box 152 / Burton-on-Trent / Staffs, DE14 1XX / England
www.rippingtrash.com, steve@rippingthrash.com

SLINGSHOT #100 / free
11 x 18 – printed – 16 pages
Much of this issue is about a local Bay Area activist named Tristan Anderson, who was recently critically injured in Palestine, and coping with the very tragic event of his being hit in the head at close range by an high-velocity tear gas canister during a protest in the West Bank. You ca---n really feel how much he means to people and how much his injury is affecting his community back home. There's lots of other interesting bits, like an interview with an ex-Black Panther, a piece about Oakland's Women's Choice Clinic shutting down, an article about some peeps getting arrested and charged under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, and Aaron Cometbus contributed a clip containing news

and esoteric secrets about the East Bay. Pretty cool. There's quite a bit more content to this issue that I could mention (Like instructions on how to save energy by using a pressure cooker for example. Can't leave that out.). It's definitely worth picking up. I ought to mention that I participated in its proofreading, so it's possible that I have a bias, but, hey, I don't pick 'em, I just review 'em. It's all good.
(JD)
3124 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley / CA 94705
www.thelonghaul.org

STANDARD ISSUE #7 / free, but $2-3 shipping
8.5 x 11- copied – 24 pgs
I guess it is a joke, but I am really turned off by the cover, which has a list of what *isn't* in the zine—including fro-hawks and why they suck, punk MILFS, and how to fight fat people. I just don't really get it. And fro-hawks rule anyway and nobody should have to have that explained to them. There is a section titled "Shitty/Not Shitty," which is simply reviews of things, not just records, art, or shows, but also things like feces and "listening to my wife talk on the phone with her mom (in Greek)," listed as either good or bad only. I like that, and I liked the reviews of books found in the garbage. But then there is a SXSW scene report that is just a review of a bunch of bands with women in them and how much they suck. I just don't get the super cynical, jaded sense of humor that at its base is just about being cruel. I find it unsophisticated. The interviews are of Demon's Claws and Savage Mind, plus an enthusiastic essay about a fish that has the head of a snake and it is a real primordial example of bad ass-ness. Of course, there is also a cool interview with Masshysteri, a delightful band I was *just listening to* this afternoon and being stoked that they sing in Swedish instead of English, which is addressed in the interview. That it was so relevant to my thought process is totally exciting because it had the delivery time of the internet but I was reading between bands at a show instead of hiding in my room staring at a glowing screen. That said, I think information coming out of the minds of these Ottawans sort of *belongs* on the web. Is that an insult? You decide; it is free after all. (JB)
292 1/2 Kent St. / Ottawa, Ontario / K2P 2A4 Canada
standardissuemag.com / Jensen_ben@hotmail.com

STOLEN SHARPIE REVOLUTION #2 / $7 USA, $10 world ppd
2.25 x 4.25 – printed – 144 pgs
This is the second installation of the how-to guide to making zines. Kind of similar, but totally overhauled, and now *Stolen Sharpie Revolution* includes stuff about the internets. It's really useful and pretty open-ended, unlike a lot of how-to guides that get way too this-is-the-only-way and mega complex and stuff. It's also a good resource for finding distros, review mags, and zine libraries. Totally seems like something to give yr little sister to impress her towards being cool, but I also felt like I learned some stuff, though I couldn't say what. Not essential but really super helpful. (MM)
Lunchroom Publishing / PO Box 17230 / Portland, OR 97217

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #218 / contact them for price
5.75 x 8.25 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish
Oh, Finnish, I really like you, but I think we're just too different. I long to understand your show reviews, your comics, the extensive article on Finnish records of 1980, many of which seem to be "200 kappaletta" – copies? Which zine is better, *Seven Inches to Freedom* or *Anti-Hippie*? How did the M:40/Bufo Finland/Russia tour turn out? What does Bloody Phoenix think about goregrind? What's up with the Shitsuck tape distro? I don't want you to change for me, and I know you wouldn't even if you could. I will treasure the element of mystery between us, whatever my loss. (JM)
PI 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
tv@punkinfinland.net

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #93 / $2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – photocopied – 44 pgs
I would find it really hard to care less about this zine. Boring liberal politics just piss me off. OK, you didn't like Bush, Obama is the second coming, war is bad and peace is good. Now pat yourself on the back and pretend you're part of the solution. Along with an annoying little piece on the Bush torture memos (oh-so-preciously titled "Shrub Kampf"), there's a reprint of an article entitled "Punk and Black are the Same Thing?!" from *Shotgun Seamstress*, a couple of interviews with Marnie Stern and Bellafea and show and record reviews. The only thing I found at all worthwhile was the reprinted article, so I'll definitely check out *Shotgun Seamstress*. Blech. (VX)
The Trouble With Normal / PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444
ttwn@hotmail.com

WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY #17 / $1 or stamps
3 x 5 – copied – 24 pgs
This is the seventeenth issue of Kurt Morris' personal zine and this one is about his trip to the land of Bjork and 24 hours of darkness, mystical Iceland. *Welcome To Flavor Country* is sort of weird because it partially seems spur of the moment like a diary, but still like he was writing it for an audience. While I wasn't that entertained by this zine (or for that matter, any other issue I've read and reviewed) I do commend some of his observations of European life: yes, Stella Artois *is* the equivalent of Miller High Life. I also found out a couple weird facts. Did you know that an Icelandic horse is shorter than the average horse? *Welcome To Flavor Country* isn't the worst thing out there, but it's not really my thing. I would rate its bathroom reading scale at about average, but leaning away from the WC and more toward reading on the porch like a nincompoop. (MJ)
Kurt Morris / 14 Taft St. #3 / Dorchester, MA 02125
welcometoflavorcountry@gmail.com
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Voetsek, Godstomper

Sat., June 13 • 7:30
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Zombie Holocaust, Devastator
Deadly Remains
Prelude to Ruin

Fri., June 19 • 7:30
Resist, Born/Dead
Coaccion, Eskapo, La Grita
Venganza, En Caro Vivo

Sat., June 20 • 7:30
Sabertooth Zombie, Pressure
Skin Like Iron, Downpresser
Worship, Secret

Fri., June 26 • 7:00
The Zeros, Negative Trend
The Lewd, more TBA

Sat., June 27 • 7:00
The Zeros, La Plebe
more TBA

Sun., June 28 • 5:00
Abrupt, Kill Deville
Deface, Violation
Jesse Morris and the Man Cougars

Sat., July 11 • 8:00
Saviours, Skeletonwitch
Trap Them, Unrestrained
Parasitic Skies

Sun., July 12 • 5:00
Angry Samoans
G.G. Elvis and the TCP Band
The Generators, Troublemaker
Shooting Lucy, Bum City Saints

Thurs., July 16 7:00
Paul Baribeau
The Boy Who Could Fly
Try the Pie

Fri., July 17
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Time for Living, These Days
Crucified, Grace Alley

Sat., July 18 • 8:00
Mika Miko
Audacity
Street Eaters, Boats!

Sun., July 19 • 4:00
Kepi the Band
The Sweethearts, The Dogs
Danger Death Ray
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Bodies, The Forgotten, Boils,
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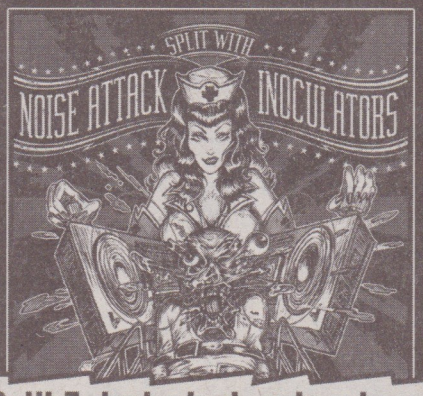

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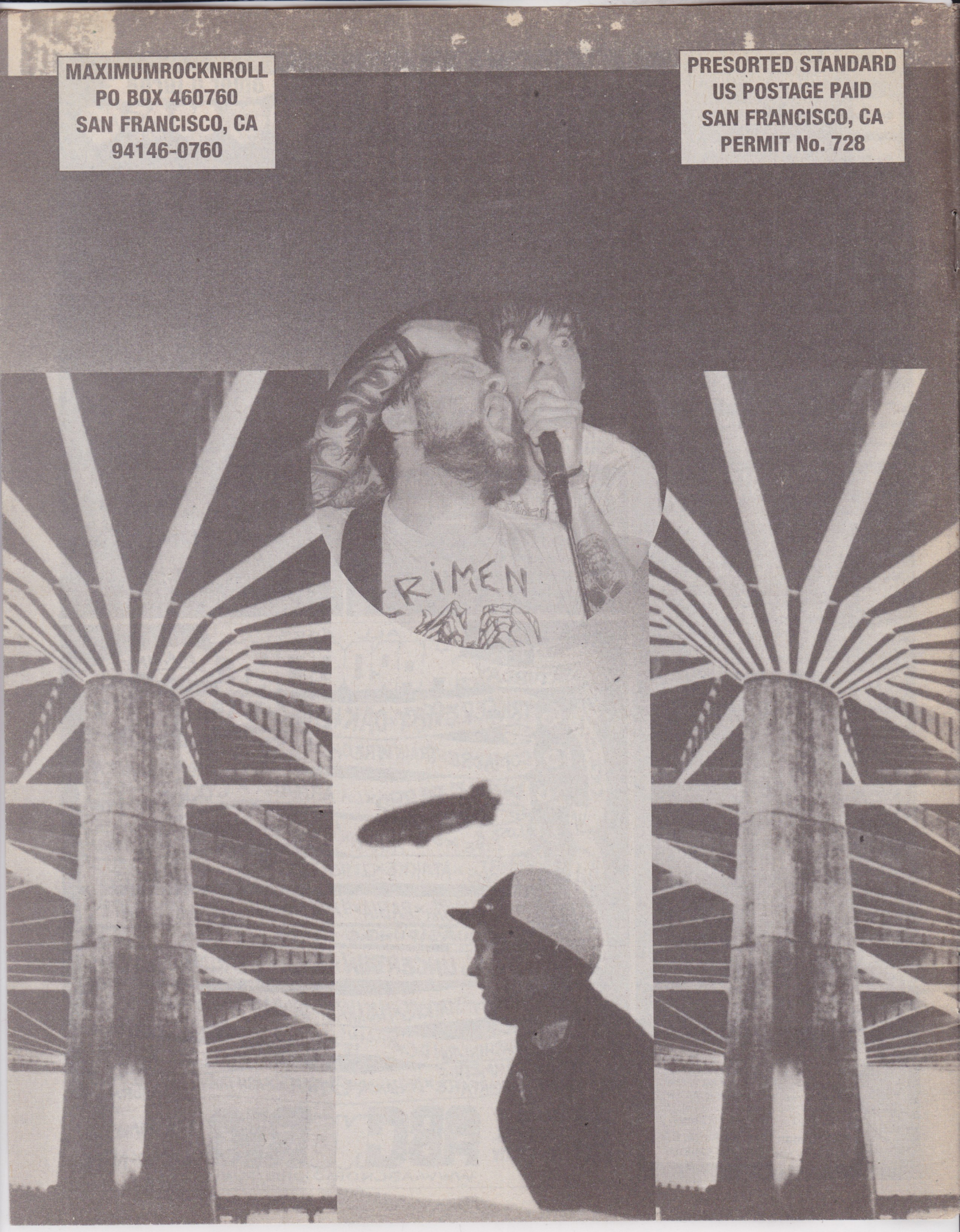
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